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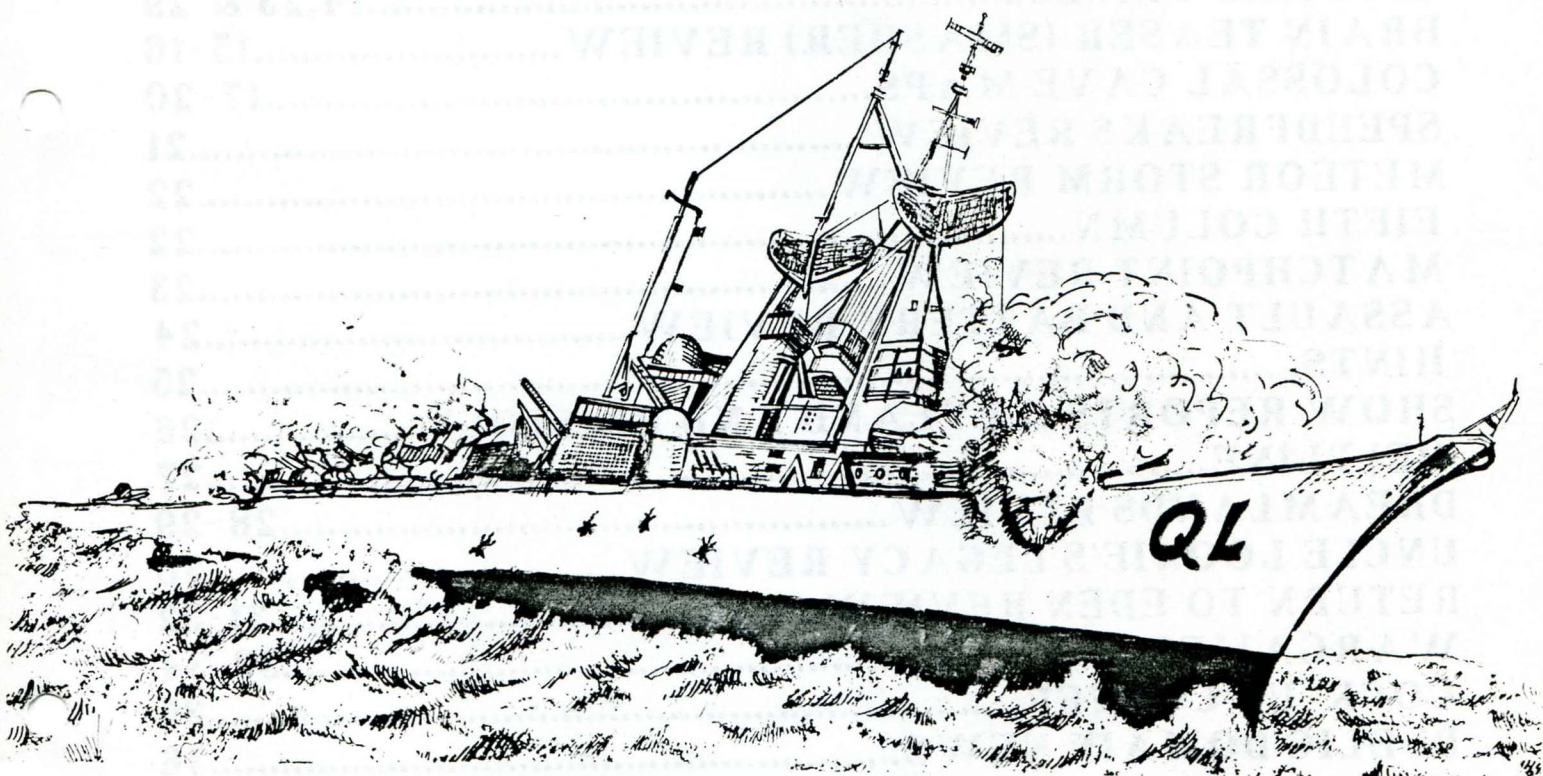
THE LAST ISSUE!

H.M.S. UNSINKABLE ?

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☞ PLUS OUR USUAL HINTS, HELPLINE AND SOLUTIONS FOR ADVENTURES

☞ AND A SPECIAL SELECTION OF ARCADE GAME EVIEWS

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the ninth and last issue of QL Adventurers' Forum. Last? What no more QLAF's? Yup. But don't panic! I'm not packing up on the QL, it's just that with this issue we seem to be getting a bit thin on the pure adventure side of things and people have done quite a lot of reviews on arcade games, so I thought, why not change the name with the next issue to take on board a wider range of games etc. So, from the next issue we will be called "QL Leisure Review" which brings it into line with "QL Technical Review".

Actually I expect our adventure coverage to continue much as before, we'll stil be doing the hints and helpline, reviews and news, so that'll be business as usual. Also I don't want people to think that there aren't any more QL adventures to solve or write about. We have adventures published ourselves: "Return to Eden" (not the Level 9 game), "Voyage of the Beano" and "Anelpum Quat"; QLympic have just released "Aqua Vitae", and every now and then we hear of others that are being planned and written. Besides which there are several that QLAF has never properly covered: "Omega", "West" and "The Prawn" spring to mind. There are also plenty that have yet to be solved completely including "Funfear", "Imagine", "Dragonsword" and "Fantasia". And if people have the energy there are numerous sources of new adventures, including translating them from other machines. I can supply 5 written in Basic on the PC on QDOS disks for people to translate into SuperBasic, two progs from Germany to help in the process! We can probably also do more of the Usborne ones as well.

Anyway what's in this issue? As I mentioned above, several people have sent in reviews of new (and not so new) arcade games for the QL. Here I must plug Kaos Software's excellent "Assault and Battery" and "Speedfreaks". Ten quid each and loads of fun. More please and soon!

We've also given plenty of room in this issue to Di-Ren. Robin Barker has written in a long letter covering both The Fugitive and their new game "Fleet Tactical Command". (The part of the letter covering their new hardware products can be seen in QLTR3.) I have also written quite a comprehensive review of Fleet Tactical Command, which I reckon is one of the best QL progs ever written - even if it does require two QL's and two players to get the most out of it.

Sadly we shan't be getting any more games from Nick Ward who has decided that his future lies in herbalism. He was planning to do more work on The Land of Beyond, but I'm not sure that this will now come to anything. If I can get the latest version and associated notes back from Nick I'd be happy to pass them onto anyone else who fancies having a bash at it.

We are now distributing Impact Entertainments programs including Here We Go. I hope to have a working version of the source code of all their programs soon so it may be possible to add graphics to Here We Go, and even add questions and answers to Quizmaster - and correct some of the spelling mistakes.

To save me some typing I've printed, as received, a couple of articles. See if you can spot them. On the technical side I've at last got myself a new photocopier, as the old Xerox 1035 wasn't sufficiently reliable. The replacement machine is a Sharp SF-8100. We'll have to see about reliability.

Right that's enough waffle for this issue, who knows what will happen for the next issue. Remember that all aspects of QL Leisure software are now our territory including arcade games, cards, chess etc. Deadline for next issue: 1st June 1990.

No cover by Francis O'Brien this issue as he has had to concentrate on his studies - this has also delayed the graphics on Voyage of the Beano. Alan Pemberton is hoping to complete Francis's outline drawings by colouring them in over the next couple of months. Offers of assistance are most welcome!

STOP PRESS

Focus Magazines have called in the receivers. We're not sure whether QL World will fold or be bought by another publisher. To end unnecessary specualtion I can let you know that I shan't be buying it. It will be a devastating blow for the QL scene if the title vanishes -it will cut out our main advertising medium for starters. So if you want to stay with the QL scene, join QUANTA, read Computer Shopper and New Computer Express and subscribe to QL Leisure Review and QL Technical Review. Anyone for QL (Bi-)Monthly Review?

Richard Alexander

NEWS

First up has to be the stopping of microdrive production by Ablex due to lack of suitable suppliies of tape. There have been scares before but this time it looks serious. The only possible bright spot is that Sinclair Research have thousands of empty mdv cartridges and nothing to put in them. As they make a fair profit from the sale of these devices I expect they'll be quite keen to see them in production again. In the meantime those dealers with stocks of the wee beasties have upped their prices to between £3.50 - £4.50 each. As software publishers will need to budget for replacement cost when pricing their products, expect mdv versions of games to rise accordingly. We're holding prices steady until April 1st, at which date we'll be issuing a new price list - probably with rises of £2-£3 per mdv per game. In the meantime scour the secondhand ads for mdvs - some are still going at a quid each! Also some branches of both Boots and Smiths are still selling mdvs at the old price of £3.50 for 2. Shop around!

What else is new?

Nigel Holder has pulled out of the QL market after only finishing one of his QL games, International Cricket. He is still supplying this for the time being and is currently working on a "Cinemaware-style role-playing graphic adventure for the ST and Amiga". Nigel is mainly working on the ST at present and is hoping to get an Atari Transputer Workstation!

C.G.H. Services has finally released Nick Ward's adventure "Anelpum Quat". Set inside a computer your task is to get a message to the outside world. The program runs on all QL's and features a parser that restricts input to only those words known to it. In addition to the usual text description of the location the exits are shown in a window in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. There's a fair bit of humour in this adventure but the puzzle element has not been forgotten. I look forward to reviews in the next issue. Cost is currently £8.00 for flp and mdv versions, but mdv price will rise to about £10 come April 1st unless we can source a continuing supply of good quality new mdvs.

C.G.H. Services (again?) will also soon be releasing "Voyage of the Beano" by Alan Pemberton with graphics by Francis

O'Brien. This will need at least 256K of memory to run. Also because it has graphics for locations it takes up a complete disk. For those people without disk drives we will be supplying a 2 mdv version with the text only version on-board. We thus reach the anomalous sitiuation whereby a cut-down version will be more expensive than the full game purely because of the price of the media! (Cost of disks is £1 - £1.50 new and branded, 2 mdvs will cost up to £8 - £9!) The disk version will probably be £10, whilst the mdv version will about £18. (Unless people supply their own mdvs in which case it'll only cost about £9.00!

Public Domain. In addition to any information in the PD section of this issue, please note that as from now (or even earlier!) we are no longer supplying mdvs with PD progs on them. You'll have to supply your own. This is to conserve our dwindling supply of mdvs.

Those of you thinking of an upgrade to your QL might like to consider getting an Amiga (it has a better specification than an ST but isn't so friendly - and neither are as friendly as your cuddly QL) and spending £3.00 for a Public Domain QL emulator. Yep, three quid for a QL! I understand it runs most QL software OK, but many arcade games are now too fast to be playable. That's OK for us as none of our games are dependent on speedy reflexes. Even Quill (word processor) runs a lot quicker. We'll print more info in 5th Column and QL Tech Rev. Other upgrade paths include various expensive ST QL emulators (averaging about £170) and QView's hardware upgrade outlined in the February QUANTA magazine. As for the THOR we're saying nowt - but have a look at what Tony Tebby has to say in the December 1989 QJump Newsletter.

As for new games, Speedfreaks, Assault and Battery, Return to Eden, Fleet Tactical Command and Brain Smasher are all reviewed in this issue, so I won't detain you any furtther. Let's hope there's more to come.

Please remember that C.G.H. Services is always interested in receiving programs for possible publication. We can't pay vast amounts in royalties, but every new (or even old!) program we can market keeps more people using the QL - which can only benefit us all.

Richard

LETTER FROM DI-REN

By the time you read this Richard should have finally received a copy of 'FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND' (FTC). No doubt most of you will have seen the adverts in the QL World and noticed references to it in QLAF. It is not my brief here to describe the programme in full (it would take pages !), more to give a short description of the game, the trials and tribulations developing it and a few points regarding THE FUGITIVE. (The second part of the letter, concerning hints on TV's and news of a new hardware product Di-Ren will be displaying along with FTC, at the QUANTA workshop in Bristol on March 4th can be found in QL Technical Review 3.)

Fact sheets regarding DI-REN's QL related products are available from us at:
DI-REN, 43 Davids Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3EP - Tel: 01 291 3751.

FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND

FTC is a highly unusual, sophisticated, 3D, real time Naval Strategy game that can be played over a network. It can also be used on a single machine. Although called a 'game' this does not in any way imply that it is 'childs play'. A 'Naval Wartime Simulator' would perhaps be a more fitting description.

Briefly, each player has a selection of 16 Warships and Support ships. All these ships are independantly controlled by yourself either by changing from ship to ship or sending signals. The scenario is set in a 1000*1000 square mile plot. To facilitate navigation, (there are shallows, tide flows, jetties etc. to contend with) supplied with the package are a selection of charts and navigational equipment.

Within certain practicalities the programme has been designed to simulate the real thing, with exceptional regard to the way the ships manouver, armament capabilities, damage control problems and equipment fitted (such as tactical displays, echo sounders etc). Commands are entered from the keyboard. As an example it is possible to steer the ship either by using the cursor keys or giving commands such as 'STEER 045'.

As far as we are aware, this is the only programme of its type. There are of course other Naval orientated simulators available, both professional and domestic. However, even the professional programmes usually only relate to single, very specific operations such as Gunnery warfare, Ship manouvering etc.

FTC has four major advantages over most other applications:

1. 3D Image Bridge Displays
2. It covers most major aspects of Naval strategy and warship operations.
3. Each user has simultaneously under his control 16 completly independent ships.
4. The ability for two players on independent machines to match their wits against each other in a Real Time, fully inter-reactive scenario.

For some time now, myself and Andrew, (FTC's Co-Author) have spent many hours playing FTC. Usually on de-bugging exercises. It would appear from our experience that the greater our competence, the longer the game lasts. For instance, the last game played before the release of V1.01 lasted for some 11 hours. Even then we called it a 'draw'. Andy had just one submarine left with practically no fuel, and I a Battleship, again with no Support ships remaining.

The development of FTC has been a very expensive, complicated, 'mind boggling' excecise. One that is not likely to be repeated. Re-coding for other machines will be childs play compared to FTC's original development.

Development problems ? There have been many and varied.

QL-QL Network. Anybody having programmed Network facilities will no doubt have noticed obvious problems. For instance, the network will not send data in anything under 256 byte blocks unless you close the channel. You cannot 'flush' the driver and repeated

closing and opening channels not only takes time, but also pegs out when the channel count exceeds 32k.

The trick, as we eventually found out, is to fool the network driver into thinking that it has received its maximum quota of 256 bytes. Easy huh !! No such luck. Tony Tebbys QJUMP toolkit II's driver is totally different to the QDOS version. I was particularly relieved after contacting the MINERVA people to find that they haven't pulled the same trick.

Originally the game was to be written in SUPERBASIC with a view to compiling. Along came DP's TURBO Compiler. This at the time appeared to be the ultimate solution for this programme. Unfortunately as the programme grew in complexity the size of the compiled code increased dramtically. To make matters worse, it was essential to increase programme speed using TURBO's maximum speed facility, which, as I understand it, creates as near as dammit pure machine code. Anybody who has tried this will probably find that the resulting code size is quite astronomical.

Eventually the major decision was taken to produce the programme in pure machine code. Fortunately being aquainted with Z80 code learning 68008 was no major problem. The programme continued to grow in complexity with a resulting decrease in operation speed.

To give you an idea of the problems this is a typical example: It is necessary to test for possible collisions between all ships. What this means is that every ship must test every other ships distance from itself. When networking, there are some 32 ships in operation. ie; every one of your 16 ships must test 31 other ships for possible collisions. This could amount to 496 computed distance tests per main programme loop. In fact what happens now is that testing decreases as proximity decreases.

The Bridge window, tactical and all analogue displays were originally drawn directly to the screen using QDOS LINE and BLOCK commands. Inaccuracies within QDOS Line routines and slow code execution eventually forced us into writing the programme's own drawing, and as an extentsion, text display drivers. As these do not have the same parameter checks to make as normal drivers they are very fast. The Bridge Window & Tactical displays are now built up in memory and overlaid to the screen display. The overlay takes a fraction of a second and cannot normally be detected.

The final major problem set FTC's release date back for a couple of months. Very close to the initial release date it was discovered that the programme would not run on an unexpanded QL. This despite the most careful calculations. QLAF's Richard probably thought we had gone into hiding during this period due to our lack of response to hi enquiries about FTC. We were in fact working some 14 hours a day on some major programme re-structuring. We were able to maintain all the features of the programme and remarkably, add a few. The ability to arrest an enemy ship being an example.

THE FUGITIVE.

Firstly a couple of hints - The 'CANARY' is all important, and the 'DEAD RAT' ? Perhaps you smell a rat ! Try digging.

Interestingly the programme was first seen by Eidersoft in 1986. The only two contentious points made by Eidersoft were that the programme at that time not compiled, nor would it react to swear words ? Which of course it still does not.

I fully accept the critisim that the command input parser is fairly limited. However consider the following points.

There seems now to be an accepted Text Adventure Language that we shall call 'TAL' for short. The Fugitive was written in an English rather than TAL context.

For instance, the word 'EXAMINE' is a prime example. In TAL one would expect to 'EXAMINE' the sideboard in order to find some keys. I can't help feeling that Granny would be slightly confused if you said 'please examine the sideboard to find my keys'.

Perhaps 'please look in the sideboard' would be a little more appropriate. Contrary to otherwise supposed you are in fact able to shorten this particular command to   just

'LOOK SIDE'

Another classic example in the Fugitive is 'the dog'. In English you don't 'GET DOG', you in fact 'get THE dog', or rather 'take the dog' etc. So the trick is 'play it as you speak it' (not in Gaelic however !!).

It raised a few smiles here to read one of the less favourable comments from one reviewer of the Fugitive who only appeared to 'get arrested!'. Apparently he preferred mowing the lawn (or was it eating grass ?).   I can only assume he must have been watching a Mega-Exciting instalment of Coronation Street on the TV whilst trying the game out.

Finally, In favour of the QL's, I have to say that we find these machines to be ideal development tools.   Not only are they cheap, they are also more versatile even now, than a lot of other machines.

Robin J A Barker - DI-REN

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FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND

I must confess to a certain feeling of trepidation in reviewing this package. It is very expensive (by comparison with other QL leisure software) and the last issue of QLAF was less than complementary about Di-Ren's first offering "The Fugitive". This trepidation was not lessened by the size of the package supplied - it's a carboard box A4 in size and $2^1/_4$ inches deep. Nestling inside this box you'll find - not just a load of useless packaging but: 2 instruction manuals (72 pages), 18 charts (4 of each of the four harbours and 6 general ones), 8 Scenario logs, registration documents and updates sheets and an envelope containing 2 of (pencils, erasers, protractors, dividers, rulers) and 64 pins. Oh yes there's a flp disk and a mdv in there as well with the program on them. As you can see this is not a quick and easy game - this is one for sitting down and playing seriously. (Though there's ample scope for fun in the game!)

That's the physical side of the game - a necessary background as we'll see. Now what is the game all about? Stated simply each of the two players controls a fleet of 16 ships, and by careful manouvering they attempt to sink all the opposition's ships. But this is no game of Battleships, nor even aquatic chess, this is a full-blooded simulation of nautical warfare. On a much grander scale than Type 22 (and much more playable too!) this battle covers an area 1000 x 1000 miles and there are treacherous shoals, rocks and lagoons to trap the unwary. Due to the difficulty in working out a decent computer intelligence program there is no one-player vs the computer option in this game, but you can easily practice by choosing the "No networking" option at start-up.

One of the most impressive parts of this game is the fact that it runs on standard 128K QL's, as well as on those with expanded memory. It has been tested on JM, JS and Minerva ROM's and now loads and works very well on all of them and will co-operate with both Trump Cards and SuperQBoards. Most of us should have the simple networking lead that was supplied with the QL - or know someone who does have one, so you shouldn't be put to extra expense there. There is also an RS-232 option for linking QL's and when the program is issued on other machines there should be the option of linking them to a QL. (No more than 2 players please!) I played the game thoroughly on Minerva and JS ROM QL's without any problems. Interestingly one does not need to enable TK2 to get the network up and running (at least on my machines - D06 and D09 vintage), but you'll probably need it if you are running the game off one machine over the network. (You have the option of either running 2 copies of the game or one.)

What does the game look like? There should be alongside this review some graphix which show you what the screen looks like. Unlike Grey Wolf (for example) where you have a seperate chart to plan long distance travel, FTC has only one screen - the bridge and from here you do everything. All your plotting has to be done using the charts provided or in your head. The manuals give clear guidance on how to do the plotting of a course using the equipment enclosed. I have to confess that I couldn't be bothered this time to use this, and relied on the readouts of position shown on the bridge to do my navigating. This may have something to do with the alarming propensity I had of ending up on the rocks. My advice - plot your course carefully on the charts and work out when the ships need to change course to avoid the nasties. Warning: the manual states that it is possible for a ship to refloat when the tide changes - this only really applies to anchorages - the shoals are not so merciful. Di-Ren haven't been able (very understandably) to implement a tow option in this game - so if your ships get stuck, that's where they stay. It is possible to steer one or two ships using the northings and eastings - but this is not recommended for the whole fleet. There is so much going on that you'll simply forget where half of them are.

FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND-2

O.K. what is it that is going on? Firstly you'll need to acquaint yourself with shipboard routine, and get used to doing things in the right order. There's no way you can get under way without weighing anchor and ships require very delicate handling in confined spaces to avoid bumping into each other. Collisions usually result in more than a scratch on the paintwork. Every ship needs to be told which direction to go in and at what speed. You can give global orders - for all ships but they won't respond at the same speed. On the other hand if you try and ease the ships out of the anchorage one at a time, you will find it takes ages and your ships become difficult to handle as they end up all over the place. Ships also seem to be extremely unreliable, although I'm not an expert on naval affairs (quiet at the back!)

Now assuming that you can manage to get all your ships out of harbour safely, you have now to steer them towards the enemy. Or do you? The more observant amongst you will notice when playing this game that submarines do not have much fuel and that they will need re-fuelling soon after reaching the opposition's harbour. So what do you do? Well, you can either sail your subs as a unit together with a tanker or send them towards one of the two neutral harbours to be replensihed there. If you send them to the neutral harbours they can wait outside the 50 mile neutrality zone and sink enemy ships which are also heading there! One problem - your opposite number will probably think of doing the same thing! As you can see, there's a lot more to this game than simply sailing from one side of the map to the other. You have to find the enemy and sink them before they sink you.

O.K. How do you manage to get any of your ships within striking distance of the enemy? Well all ships are fitted with I.F.F. radar which can let you know the last recorded position of the enemy ships, and then when they come within range it will tell you their distance and their heading from your current position. Neat eh? Again small problem - if they're within radar distance of you, you are of them. So you have to make sure you've got longer range weapons, or faster firing ones or that they've got problems. The longest range missiles are nuclear ones which can travel 250 miles. Hint: one of these on the enemy's dockyard early in the game may well prove devastating if they haven't got all their ships out from their anchorage, but again two can play at that game! Also these missiles can be intercepted. Final point - you may want to re-arm your ships in the enemy's home port if you get there - no point in wasting it!

That leaves straight forward ship to ship engagements. Cruisers, destroyers and battleships all carry Sea Strike Missiles which have a range of 30 miles. These are deadly accurate - unless of course the opposition fires chaff up to decoy your missiles. Also these missiles do not seem to be very effective. I once fired about 60 at a submarine - apart from the ones that simply vanished (perhaps I was at the edge of the missile range) numerous hits were made, but by sailing out of range I was able to repair the submarine. However on returning to the fray, in an attempt to torpedo the battleship, a further 30 or so missiles sealed the sub's fate. By the way, although everything takes place in mode 4, the simple red/white flashing on the bridge is a most effective way of displaying that you've been hit. If you do use up all your missiles, surface war ships do have guns, either 4.5" or 16", which have the advantage of not being deflectable. On the other hand they're bloody difficult to aim properly. Due to the speed at which the program runs it is almost impossible to aim guns manually as the range and heading change too quickly. Robin has suggested that you steer on a parallel course to the enemy at a steady distance and speed to fire guns. Trouble is - they are then put in the same position and can more easily hit you! If you do manage to get close enough, 5 miles to be precise, and you are so equipped, you can let loose with the old tinfish. Haven't worked out whether these are the homing ones or not but they are quite effective. Best used by subs at very close range at slow moving targets. If all else fails you can charge, kamikaze style, head-first into the opponents ship and ram them, which usually results in both ships being crippled or even sunk.

All is not lost if you do get hit, either by missiles and shells, or by sabotage. You have a very effective crew who seem quite capable of repairing virtually any damage your ships sustain. All you need do is order the relevant action to be undertaken,

FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND-3

like fight a fire or repair something and away they go to do it. Well, nearly always. Some damage is such that it prevents other damage being repaired. This is especially true of damage to the switchboards and engines. I recommend you have the power supplies diagram in front of you when dealing with repairs as you have to do everything in the right order to get things not only fixed, but also when returning them to use. One of the most irritating things is having to get the order of I.F.F. computer and Tactical computer right once power is restored to the aft switchboard. Also don't forget that the main switchboard controls all the others but the bridge instruments can be activated even if aft and fore switchboards are out of commission. Conversely activating aft and fore switchboards does not restore bridge instruments - they have to be done seperately. Another point to bear in mind - some damage can be so bad that it cannot be repaired, once something is destroyed that is it.

What other matters are there to consider in this game? Besides the tankers, which can refuel your ships (provided you can control both ships sufficiently well so that they steam side by side at the same speed and in the same direction) you can also replenish your ships from auxillary ships. They can top up on stores. What use have stores you may wonder? The answer is very simple. Not only are warships killing machines, they are also crewed by huuman beings, and human beings still need fresh water, food etc to survive. If you do let stores get too low then morale on board ship is lowered, leading to sabotage of vital equipment. As you can imagine, being deprived of radar or missiles due to store shortage when within range of enemy warships is not a position I'd recommend. You'll also need to fix the freshwater supplies if they get hit.

Another factor that you have to take into account is the state of readiness that each ship is currently sailing in. To sail at all you have to be at cruising stations, which is fairly cushy for the staff so they don't grumble too much. But when things hot up and the metal starts flying they have to go to action stations. Now too long at action stations leads to very frayed nerves, and that means that, once again, vital equipment starts to break down. So stand the crews down when they are not in action. This is probably easiest done by issuing an all ships "cruising stations" - anyone still fighting will automatically go back to action stations. Action stations is also required to fire any of the weaponry or even chaff.

As you can imagine, all this is fairly straight-forward with just one ship to contend with, but 16? If you are confident you can work out the correct courses for all ships to sail where you want them to go, and can work out when they are going to get there, which the manuals shows you how to do, then maybe it is safe to take command of a strike force to scour the oceans for the enemy, leaving your support vessels with the subs and a frigate or two to skulk around somewhere that is relatively safe. For myself I found that I needed to constantly check each ship, just to see where it was and how it was doing, and even then I managed to run half of them aground. Hint: avoid like the plague those two big blobs in the middle of the chart - the Medusa lagoon is as effective at stopping ships as the Penhale Shale. The lines around it may stop at 240m, but you can still run aground there. (The new maps which are coloured in, make this a lot clearer than the charts supplied initially.)

One very nice point to take into consideration is Di-Ren's commitment to this game. The QL version is not only an important stand-alone product, it is also serving as a test-bed for versions on other machines, so feedback is most important. Di-Ren also are very prompt at dealing with any queries you may come up with. I noticed problems (now cured) with the backups onto floppy disk using the SuperQBoard which meant the game refused to run. The problem was traced, cured and a revised version in the post to me in a matter of days. In short Di-Ren will do their utmost to see that you get the most from this game. They have already issued a couple of newshseets with updates on the game, letting people know of queries and bug-fixes.

And the bottom line? Without doubt, a brilliant piece of programming. A good idea well implemented, especially squeezing it into 128K. The price is, I'm afraid high, and even so Di-Ren are unlikely to make money on this version - actually I expect they'll lose rather a lot, especially with full-page adverts in QL World - but this is a long-term gamble as they should be able to recoup their development costs if they can

Ship's State Board   Nuclear Warning Board   Northings/Eastings

DAWL Readout   Remaining Fuel   Op/Cap   Ships Clock

Depth Readout   Bridge Window

| STATE 1 | DAWL 000 | DEPTH 052 | FUEL 01499 | | | OP/CAP 001% | NORTH 172 | EAST 166 | 00.21:00 |

```
20mm BATTLESHIP B.09        > SIGNAL FROM SHIP 03         HELM CONTROLS
                            MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY
  30    « «0» »    30       >WEIGH ANCHOR                    \ | /        \ | /
                            AYE AYE SIR                  —324         PORT 03 STBD
                            >STEER 220                    / | \        03 03 32
          T                                                           SPD SET MAX
                    R  D         ASM FRIGATE    F.02
   |                                                         ARMAMENT
   |           R              NORTH 160  SPEED 18      <F1> FWD 4.5"    751
  S|    S   R                 EAST  172  HEAD 315      <F2> AFT 4.5"    864
   |                          DAWL  000  BRG  189      <F3> FWD 16"     450
          C   C               RANGE 013 /500           <F4> AFT 15"     312
                              <E>NEMY <O/UR <↑↓>        <F5> SEA STRIKE  120
                                            IFF COMPUTER
```

Current Ship   Command Console   Ships Compass &   Rudder & Speed
Display   Digital Display   Indicator

Tactical Display   IFF Computer   Armament Display
                     Display

FLEET TACTICAL COMMAND - 4

come up with a winner on the ST and Amiga (and even the PC and Archimedes.) Certainly in terms of the amount of time you could spend playing the game - I notched up 8 hours at one sitting with no trouble - and the quality it is certainly worth the money. But you'll really need to have 2 QL's available and another human opponent to get the best from this package. This is not something you load and play for a few minutes on a rainy afternoon. You have to invest quite a lot of time into learning how to play the game and even more in playing it. Me? I've got the review copy, for which my thanks to Di-Ren, but would I have bought it? To be honest no, as I live along way from any other QL owners and the other people in my house certainly haven't got the patience to learn all about navigation and the specialised vocabulary involved in commanding ships. I don't expect there will be many sales to people under 18 for this one. But as the QL market has a large number of over-18's then I hope that they will be able to find the time to master this game and will   consider £50 money well spent in the long run. I only wish that games of this quality had been available for the QL in 1985/6 and then it may well have kept a far greater following amongst games players, and we would then have had a better range to play now. As it is, this, together with Return to Eden and possibly one or two of the flight simulators mark more of a swan song for the QL, products of the last generation of software developers prepared to take the machine to the limits and its users seriously. I suspect 1990 will see the last of this type of game. More is the pity.

Richard Alexander

TREASURE HUNT REVIEW AND HINTS

P.D. Price £1.00 + media from CGH Services

This old chestnut was on the games cartridge supplied with many a QL, before the Sinclair troubles. I had a go at it and found many bugs, five times I sent it to Sinclair and each time they sent a different Mdv, and each time the game didn't work. So I forgot about it, until one day I wrote to Sinclair QL World. Sometime later a certain R.Mellor wrote back. Having said what was wrong and suggesting a few improvements, well the rest is history. This game is fairly easy and hardly stretches the more experienced adventurer but it is not without it's charm.

Having loaded you arrive next to a boulder with a sign saying "Leave Treasure Here", and so off you go. You will need to lift up the boulder to get a key, so go north to find something to prise the boulder, you now go east, get into the shed and get your sword and first piece of treasure. Don't go south from here or you will be in trouble, ORCS abound, be warned. Leave the wood outside the shed and go back to the boulder, now south to get your armour and armed with your sword you are ready to go north and slay soldiers, and east to kill off orcs, get into the castle and off west to battle dragons.

If you run into problems try asking for help, with this adventure you do sometimes get it. All the commands are simple such as "take rope, climb down well, examine wall, leave gold pieces etc. If you get hungry type "INV" for a tasty snack but if you want anything else you will have to trap it first, then cook it and then eat, so don't take too long about it. You will also need water. Some of the objects are used more than once so don't be too keen to drop things. If I have whetted your appetite for this adventure then here are a few more clues for you;

1)Castle guards can be bribed.

2)Ropes need to be tied to go down in the world.

3)Don't carry too much. Leave it behind and go back for it.

4)Climb trees before you start chopping them down.

5)Use 'Italian' passwords to get into caves.

6)Use your lamp wisely. Lamp? Of course there's a lamp, what adventure do you think this is?

7)Snow shoes are useful in marshes too you know!

8)In the snow it"s worth following in other peoples footsteps.

9)Bears love *****, well Pooh did anyway.

You want more clues? Well alright just one more then.....when you've returned all the treasure you get 100%. It's a bit of an anticlimax I know but when I got there I was pleased.

All in all this game is fairly simple but it"s fun, and it'll have you scratching your head a bit, whilst I sit here all smug, but then maybe you know what a TRUBET is. But then that's another game altogether!

BYE FOR NOW.

MIKE TUPPENNEY

AQUANAUT 471

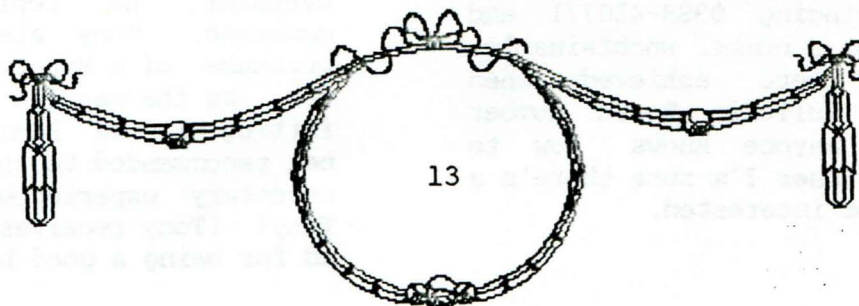AQUANAUT 741 - The Solution   Albert and Stuart Watt

I must give credit to Martin Jarosik for providing a vital clue in QLAF No. 8. Despite having progressed further into the adventure than Martin, he had succeeded in discovering the vital **Power Crowbar**. I examined my maps and decided that there was only one possible location for this item - the toolchest. The technique of re-examining containers after the removal of an object occurs at a second location.

On entering the dome, the first vital object to collect is the **Memory Grid**. Proceed through the security zone and find the **Mirror**, read the **Manual** and head for the 3-D **Poster**. Use the mirror to enter the poster which will reveal a computer room. Repairing the computer with the memory grid will reveal a Huey-12 and a **Plastic Card**. Search around this area and collect the Blaster. Proceed back to the Storage room and drop the mirror to leave you with two objects and an obedient Huey-12. Find the **Toolchest** and obtain the **Plant Cutters** and the **Power Crowbar**. Huey requires regular reminders to follow you around.

Proceed to the area of the forcefield and order Huey-12 to go north. This will deactivate the forcefield and allow you to find the **Flashlight**. You then have to proceed to the slidding door which can be unlocked with the **Plastic Card** to reveal a **Storage Box** which contains an **Old Newspaper** and an **Air Helmet**.

You then proceed to the Airlock where you require the plastic card to unlock it. To proceed further you must take with you the **Air Helmet**, **Plant Cutters**, **Flashlight**, **Blaster** and **Huey-12**. The Blaster can be dropped after the encounter with the Mutant. The **Plant Cutters** can be dropped after you obtain the Seaweed. To minimise the number of objects combine the **Seaweed** with the **Mushroom** to form a **Pill** as instructed by a **Note** found in a debris strewn **Plateau**. Tell **Huey** to lift the **Control Module** to release it from the mud and then carry your loot back to the dome.

By this time the message from Huey-14 should have been translated and Huey-12 can be allowed to rest. You now only require the Flashlight, Plastic Card, Control Module and the Pill with you before you proceed through the two Security Zones. The Slidding Doors behind the second Security Zone leads to the Generator Room where you repair the **Generator** with the **Control Module** having taken your home made anti-radiation pill before entering. Return to the Computer Room and press the Button to reveal the Final Solution.

AQUANAUT 471

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┌─────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────┐
└─────────────────────┘          └─────────────────────┘
                                              Ⓓ
┌───────────┐        ┌───────────────────┐   ┌───────────┐
└───────────┘        └───────────────────┘   └───────────┘
                  Ⓒ    Ⓑ
┌─────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────┐
└─────────────────────┘          └─────────────────────┘
                                        Ⓐ
┌───────────┐        ┌───────────────────┐   ┌───────────┐
└───────────┘        └───────────────────┘   └───────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

At the start, move to position A and wait. Watch for the sequence
when a group of three droids are on the same level as you are.
You have the best chance when the middle droid moves towards you.
As the droid falls through the hole, move quickly to position B.
As a droid drops again move to position C and again as the droid
drops through the gap move on to position D and rest. Again when
a droid drops through the hole beside you move to the top.

The reason for trying to show you how to do the screen rather than
give you a saved position is because there are more than just one
security area in the dome.

BITS AND PIECES

QLSUB

Elsewhere we've commented on some problems
we've been having with QLSUB. The March
QUANTA magazine reports that post sent to
the PO Box is being returned. I can add
that I've tried ringing 0388-450771 and
0388-450610 and got a number unobtainable.
Similiar results were achieved when
phoning the QLSUB Bulletin Board number
0388-773737. If anyone knows how to
contact Richard Turner I'm sure there's a
few people who'd be interested.

QL REPAIRS

I'd like to publicly thank Tony Firshman
for the excellent job he did on repairing
the second-hand QL I bought before Xmas.
Not only did he give it a thorough
overhaul, he replaced the keyboard
membrane. Tony also arranged for the
purchase of a Minerva ROM and fitted that
too, as the machine was an AH machine and
fitting Minerva ROMs to some of them is
not recommended to those of us without the
necessary experience and skills. Bravo
Tony! (Tony receives a coveted free QLAF
ad for being a good bloke!)

BRAIN TEASER REVIEW

Written by Jochen Merz
Supplied by: T.K. Computerware
Stone Street, North Stanford,
Ashford, Kent.
Tel: 0303 81 2801
Price £18.00.   3 1/2" Disk only.

or:

Jochen Merz Software
Im Stillen Winkel 12
4100 Duisburg 11
West Germany
Price £12.90

Memory Expansion required.

This is a new Arcade game for the Q.L. written by the talented West German software writer, Jochen Merz.
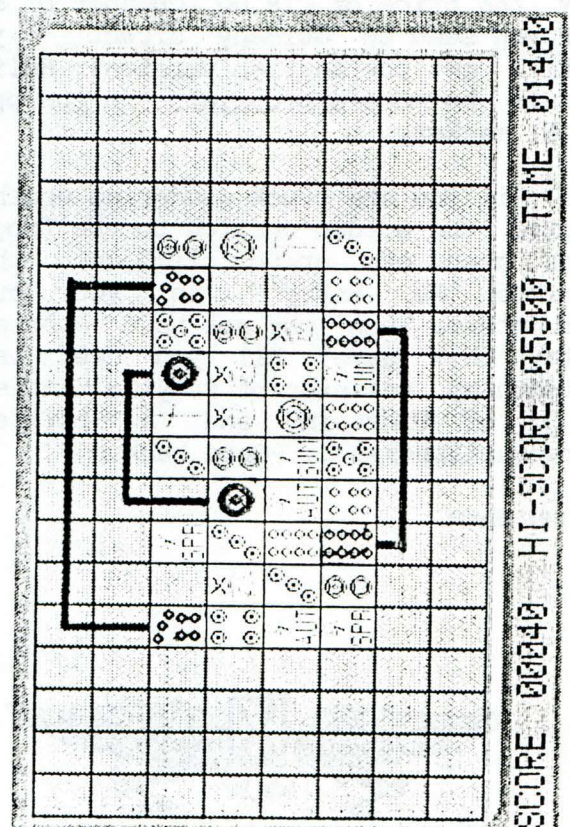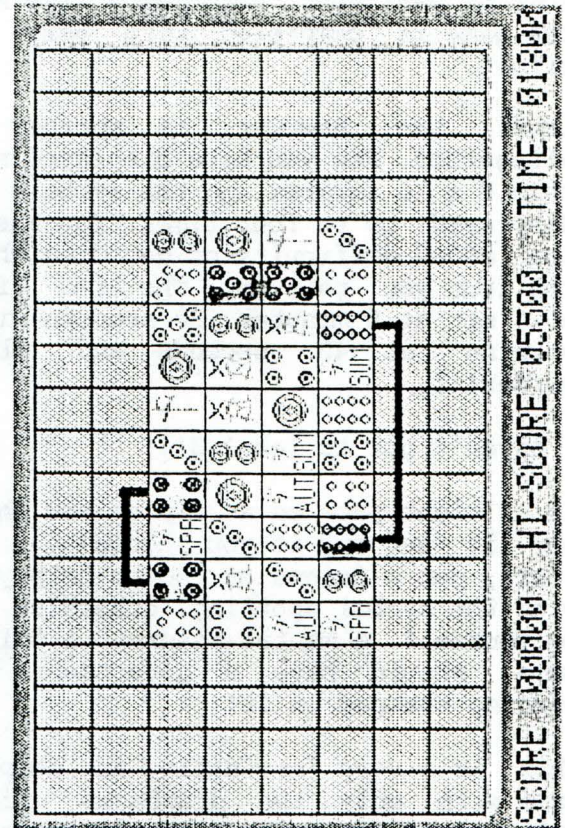
Having read the instructions given in the handout, I must confess I thought I was being insulted by the simplicity of the game. Now, having played it many times, I can see why the author named it "Brainteaser". (Brainsmasher - in back Page of Q.L. WORLD) ... there's more to it than meets the eye!

On booting up you have a choice of: F1 - Deutch or F2 - English. My German being somewhat lacking, I press F2. The opening display shows a dragon and the choice of a. an easy game or b. a difficult game. I decide to take the easy route first and with my joystick I move the cursor around the screen to start the game. Following the pressing of <SPACE> the screen clears and a grid of 4 x 10 squares form with strange looking symbols in them. They seem a mixture of Egyptian heiroglyphics and Nordic runes.

The simple object is to clear the screen by finding two identical squares and pressing the <SPACE> button when the cursor is over them. Simple, I hear you say, but I'm afraid there is a catch. In order to capture them, both symbols must be connected by an imaginary line which can only cross empty parts of the board. That line can only be bent twice.

The attached diagrams explain how this works in more graphical form.

At this level I am allowed 3 minutes to complete the task with a warning bleep

sounding when there is only 30 seconds left. After four or five goes, even for someone past their schooldays like myself, the game is completed with very little effort.

Level two, however, is another thing altogether. Now you have displayed no less than 6 x 16 squares and the symbols can be displayed up to four times. You then have the added difficulty of deciding which of the four you pair up. The time limit is now set at 6 minutes 30 seconds with the warning at 40 seconds and that is murder!!!
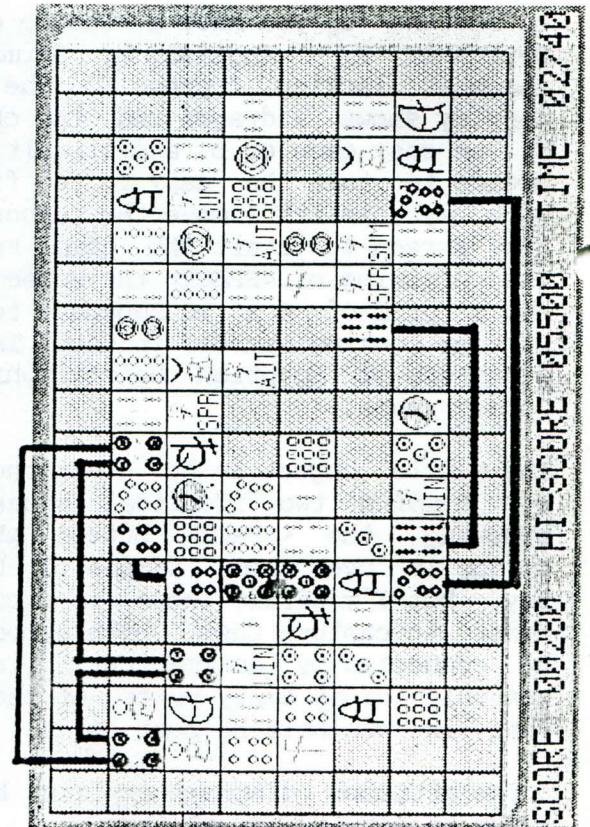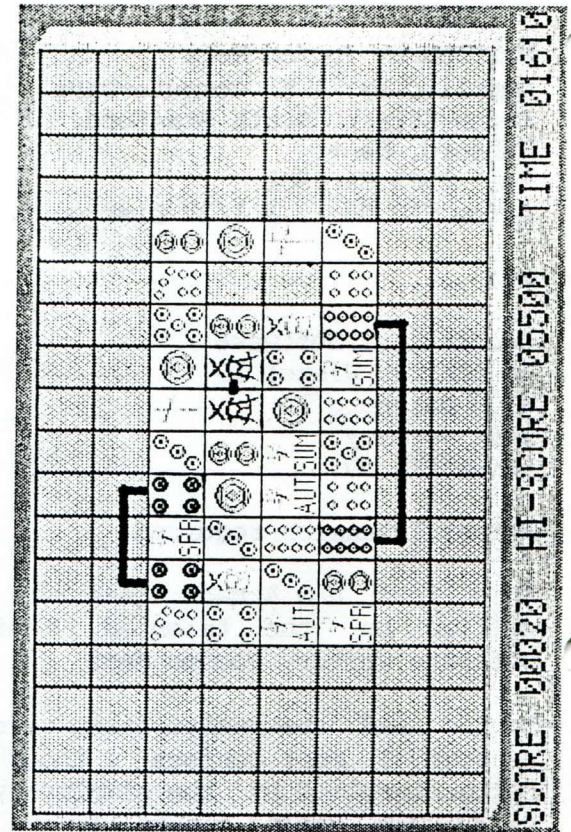
I haven't got to level 3!!!

If I might pass on a tip to you when you buy it (and buy it you should) ... at the start, get a friend or two to help you out with the symbol spotting, otherwise you'll do yourself a mental injury. I think the game should have a government health warning stamped on it!

This is a very fascinating and compulsive game with only two drawbacks. Firstly, only buy it if you have a Monitor; some of the symbols are so detailed that they wont show up on an ordinary television screen. The second is the cost. Excellent although the game is, I feel many will be put off by the price of £18.00 (Cheaper of course if you send to Germany direct - you'll still get the English version). Half this would be more appropriate in the present Q.L. market.

So, if you are stuck wondering whether to "give the golden chalice to the frog with the green eye or to climb down the pit marked 'No Entry'", in your current adventure. Then why not have a break and play this game? All you need is the lightning reflexes of Praying Mantis, the I.Q. of Einstein and a bottle of tranquillisers! ... Good Luck.
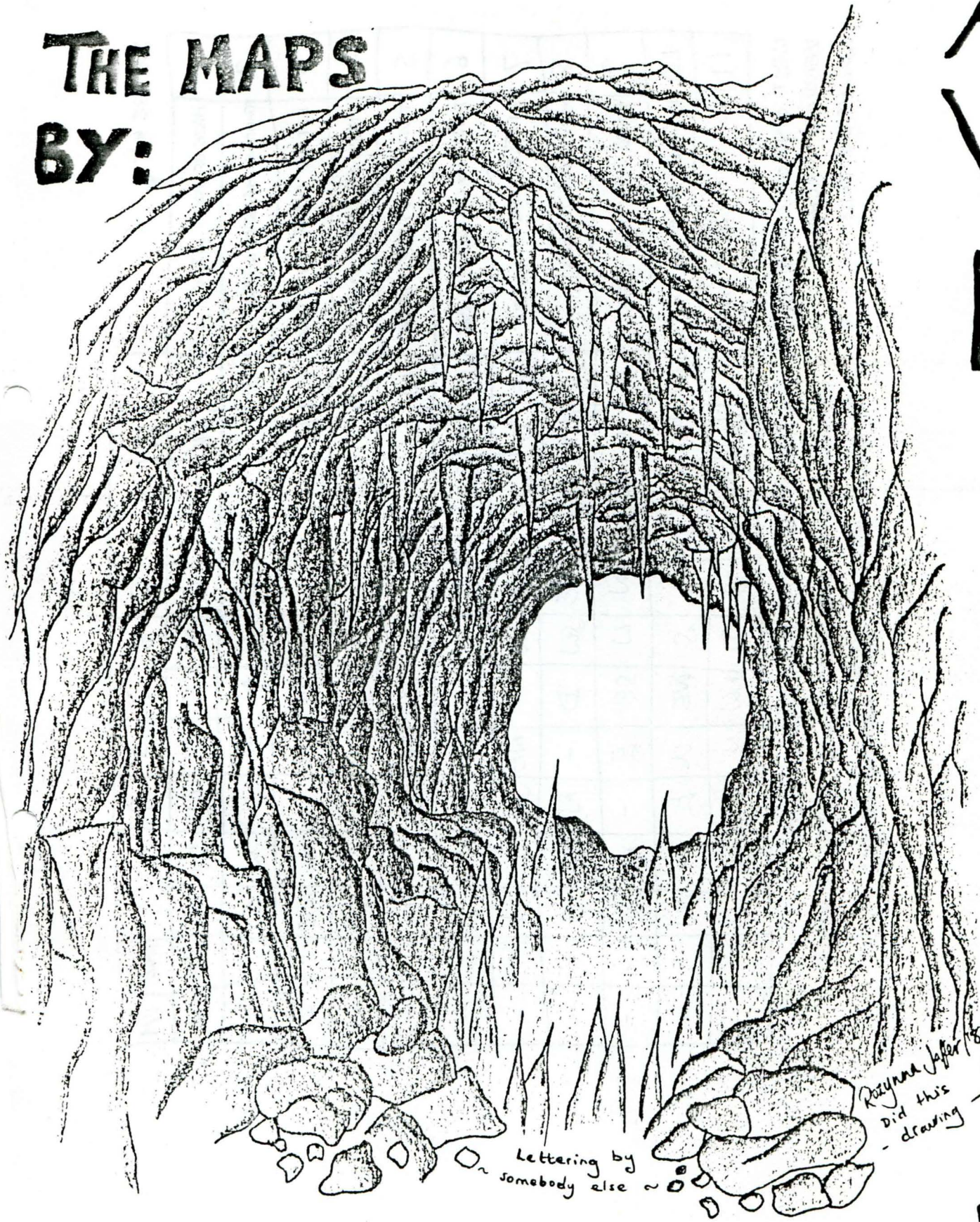
John Shaw

COLOSSAL CAVE

THE MAPS BY:

MALC SMITH

Lettering by ~ somebody else ~

Rozynne Jaffer '89 Did this ~ drawing ~

ADVENTURE

PART 2

YOU ARE IN: →

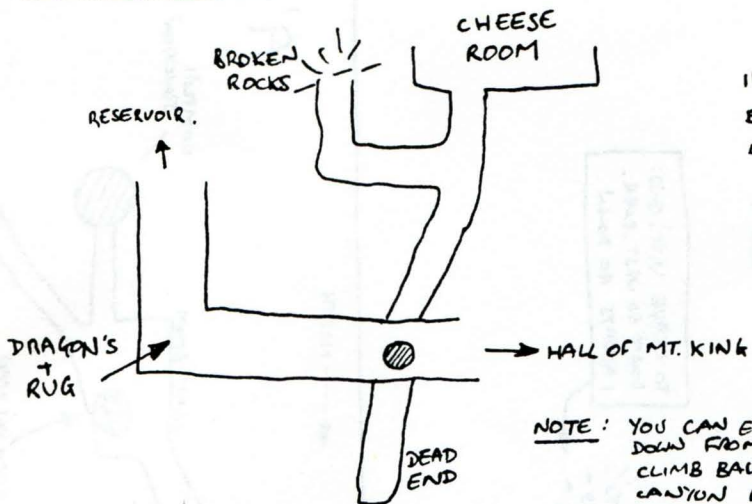|		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	HALL	VM
1	MAZE OF TWISTY LITTLE	-	NE	-	N	U	SE	E	S	W	SW	NW	D	-
2	TWISTING MAZE OF LITTLE	U	-	S	SE	SW	NE	N	D	NW	W	E	-	-
3	LITTLE MAZE OF TWISTING	-	E	-	U	SE	NW	W	SW	D	N	NE	-	S
4	MAZE OF LITTLE TWISTY	SW	W	NE	-	D	N	U	NW	S	E	SE	-	-
5	TWISTY LITTLE MAZE	N	S	U	NW	-	E	SW	SE	NE	D	W	-	-
6	TWISTING LITTLE MAZE	NE	SE	SW	W	E	-	S	N	U	NW	D	-	-
7	LITTLE TWISTY MAZE	SE	D	W	E	NW	U	-	NE	SW	S	N	-	-
8	MAZE OF TWISTING LITTLE	W	NW	E	S	NE	SW	D	-	N	SE	U	-	-
9	MAZE OF LITTLE TWISTING	D	U	NW	SW	N	W	SE	E	-	NE	S	-	-
10	LITTLE MAZE OF TWISTY	NW	N	SE	D	W	S	NE	U	E	-	SW	-	-
11	TWISTY MAZE OF LITTLE	E	SW	N	NE	S	D	NW	W	SE	U	-	-	-

WEST END OF LONG HALL → LOCATION ONE (BY GOING SOUTH).

VENDING MACHINE → LOCATION THREE (BY GOING NORTH OR BACK).

LOCATION ONE → LONG HALL (BY GOING DOWN).

VENDING MACHINE MAZE

SECRET CANYON EAST OF DRAGON:

CHEESE ROOM

BROKEN ROCKS

RESERVOIR.
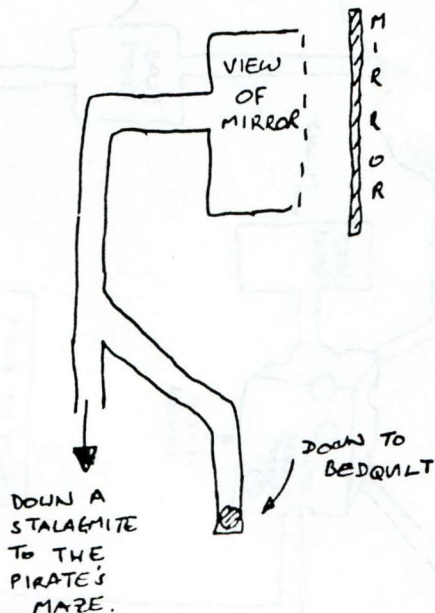
DRAGON'S + RUG

HALL OF MT. KING

DEAD END

IF YOU GET CAUGHT IN THE BROKEN ROCKS GO DOWN TO LEAVE.

NOTE: YOU CAN ENTER THE CANYON BY GOING DOWN FROM THE PASSAGE BUT YOU CAN'T CLIMB BACK UP. YOU CAN LEAVE CANYON BY GOING TO THE SWISS CHEESE ROOM — BUT NOT VICE VERSA.
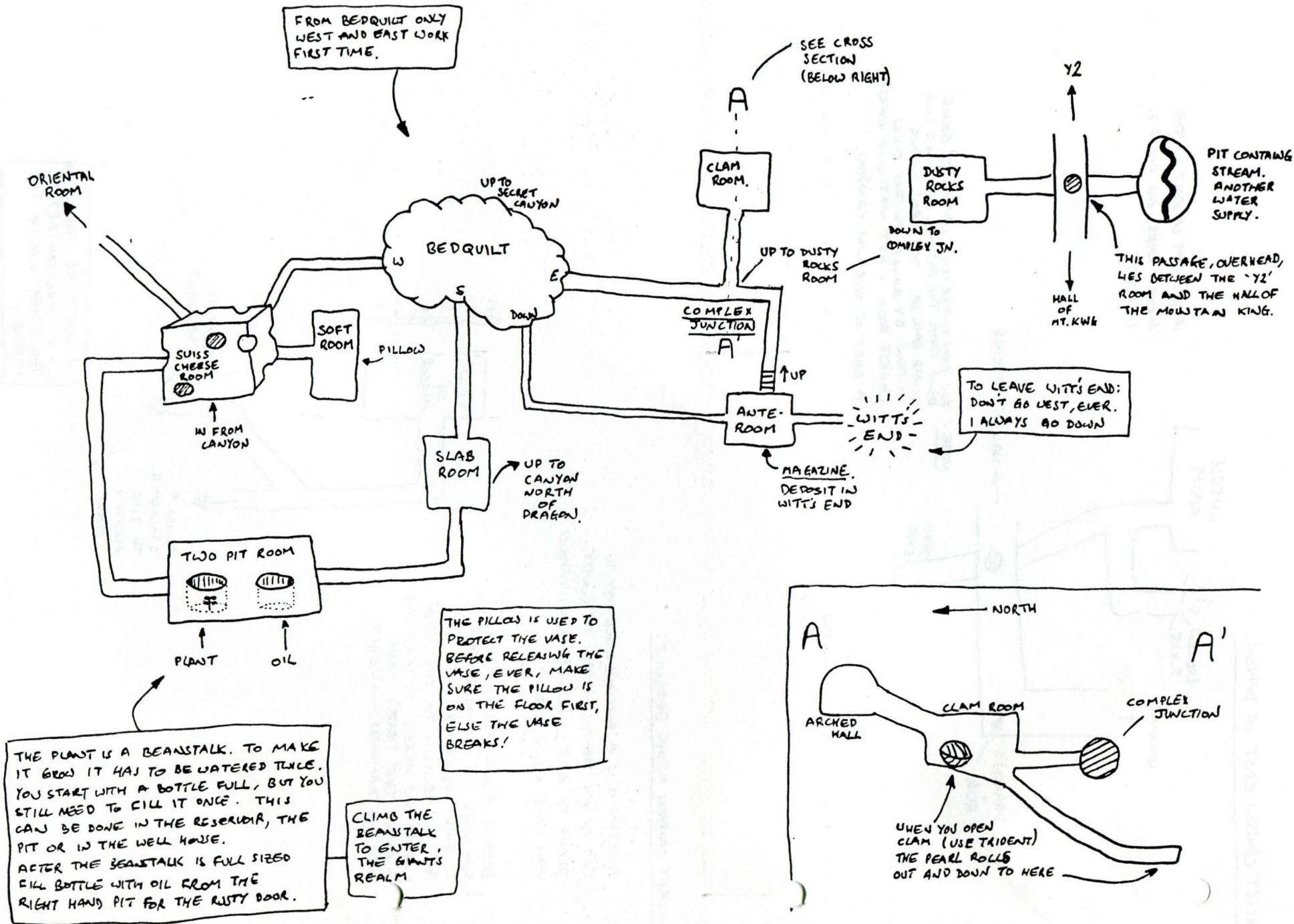A SORT OF ONE WAY CANYON.

SECRET CANYON ABOVE BEDQUILT:

ALL THIS IS IS A POSSIBLY QUICK WAY TO GET TO THE PIRATE'S MAZE. OF COURSE TRYING TO GET SOMEWHERE FROM BEDQUILT MAY TAKE ALL NIGHT!

BECAUSE OF THE UNCERTAINTY OF HOW LONG IT'S GOING TO TAKE TO FIND THIS PASSAGE + IT'S POSITION RELATIVE TO THE MAZE I NEVER GO HERE. IT IS ADVISED TO ENTER THE PIRATE'S MAZE WITH THE DIAMONDS + NUGGET.

VIEW OF MIRROR

MIRROR

DOWN A STALAGMITE TO THE PIRATE'S MAZE.

DOWN TO BEDQUILT

IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING THIS IS HOW YOU GET TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIRROR....

FROM BEDQUILT ONLY WEST AND EAST WORK FIRST TIME.

SEE CROSS SECTION (BELOW RIGHT)

A

Y2

ORIENTAL ROOM

CLAM ROOM.

DUSTY ROCKS ROOM

PIT CONTANG STREAM. ANOTHER WATER SUPPLY.

UP TO SECRET CANYON

BEDQUILT

W

S

E

DOWN

DOWN TO COMPLEX JN.

UP TO DUSTY ROCKS ROOM

THIS PASSAGE, OVERHEAD, LIES BETWEEN THE 'Y2' ROOM AND THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING.

HALL OF MT. KNG

SOFT ROOM

PILLOW

SUISS CHEESE ROOM

COMPLEX JUNCTION

A'

↑ UP

IN FROM CANYON

ANTE-ROOM

WITTS END

TO LEAVE WITT'S END: DON'T GO WEST, EVER. I ALWAYS GO DOWN

SLAB ROOM

UP TO CANYON NORTH OF DRAGON.

MAGAZINE. DEPOSIT IN WITT'S END

TWO PIT ROOM

PLANT

OIL

THE PILLOW IS USED TO PROTECT THE VASE. BEFORE RELEASING THE VASE, EVER, MAKE SURE THE PILLOW IS ON THE FLOOR FIRST, ELSE THE VASE BREAKS!

THE PLANT IS A BEANSTALK. TO MAKE IT GROW IT HAS TO BE WATERED TWICE. YOU START WITH A BOTTLE FULL, BUT YOU STILL NEED TO FILL IT ONCE. THIS CAN BE DONE IN THE RESERVOIR, THE PIT OR IN THE WELL HOUSE. AFTER THE BEANSTALK IS FULL SIZED FILL BOTTLE WITH OIL FROM THE RIGHT HAND PIT FOR THE RUSTY DOOR.

CLIMB THE BEANSTALK TO ENTER, THE GIANTS REALM

NORTH

A

A'

ARCHED HALL

CLAM ROOM

COMPLEX JUNCTION

WHEN YOU OPEN CLAM (USE TRIDENT) THE PEARL ROLLS OUT AND DOWN TO HERE

SPEEDFREAKS REVIEW

This is a new arcade game from a relative new-comer (as software houses go) to the QL scene. The game can cater for up to three players, who each race a car around a track (shown in an overhead view) against a car controlled by the computer. If there are less than three people willing to play, the computer will control the other unused cars on the track, but it seems as if it concentrates on its own car.

There are eight tracks to race around, each increasing in difficulty, and the computer-controlled car getting faster on each track. There are also lots of added little extras, such as oil, water, sand and even whirlwinds!

A lot of thought seems to have gone into the design of the tracks and the interaction of the cars. However, I was a little surprised that you can drive your car directly over the top of the other cars, without having to worry about avoiding them (perhaps the game already contains enough obstacles)! Should you overshoot on a corner or lose control, your car will crash into the armco barriers at either side of the track, either leading to a spectacular crash, or bringing you to a spinning halt. Do not worry though, you need only turn your car around and then you can chase off after the other cars to try and get into the lead.

Besides the headache of driving around hairpin bends and chicanes, there are also bridges on the tracks, where the road crosses over itself; which add to the excitement as your car disappears as you drive under it, and so of course you may lose control and come to a halt under the bridge!!

As you drive around, spanners appear on the track every so often. Collect four of these and you can then increase the speed, power and traction of your car if you so wish, to help you to drive even better (although with my driving, I missed the ability to fit extra bumpers which exists on the proper arcade game).

Overall, the graphics are more than adequate, and the game is very addictive. I would though have liked the option to choose the track I was to start on so that I could practice my racing on those circuits where the computer always beat me to the finish line and so ended my game. The game represents excellent value for money and I wouldn't hesistate in recommending it to anyone.

Rich Mellor

THE INEVITABLE BIT FROM HIMSELF:

I must agree with Rich's comments on this game, it really is good fun to play. As for controlling the little cars, I found it easier to use the keys rather than my joysticks, but whether that was because the joysticks are very sensitive or the keyboard is easier I don't know. That said there is also the problem with keyboard control that sometimes the program doesn't pick up key presses, resulting in a nasty little accident. But then, that might be more to do with my keyboard!

I managed to play this with one of my fellow house occupiers and he enjoyed it quite a lot too, not bad going considering he usually is stuck in front of an ST when playing games. The graphics are none too brilliant, much better than a Speccy but not so good as an ST, but they're functional and as good as you can get on a QL.

One point for people thinking of playing this on an ST or Amiga, using an emulator - the game requires a key microdrive in mdv2_. Without it the game won't load. I've no idea if there's a way around this for people who need to run on disk only systems - and even if I did know of a way I wouldn't print it here as it would be deemed to be an aid to software piracy. Perhaps a letter to the publishers would elicit a solution to this problem.

In view of the appaling shortage of good arcade style games on the QL at present, Damon is to be warmly congratulated on bringing this game out. Together with Assault and Battery he has shown that the QL can be used to produce good games. Let's hope the dramatic rise in the cost of mdvs doesn't mean that Kaos's prices have to rise as well.

Definitely one of QLAF's recommended buys!
Richard

METEOR STORM REVIEW

Price :Varies depending on supplier.
Memory:128K (Microdrive only)

Remember that old Atari Corp. game called Asteroids? Black and white vector graphics but 100% great gameplay. Remember all those 10p coins lost forever as you struggled to reach just one more screen? Well if you do, then the chances are that you've heard of Meteor Storm, published by Sinclair Research way back in the days when the QL was still in its infancy. For this was the mighty Quantum Leap's version of that great classic.

Chances are also that you have not bought the program as it received almost universal scorn and derision when released, (Sinclair User were particularly critical I seem to remember). I managed to pick it up for £5 at a microfair - at that price I could afford to risk it being as bad as the reviews claimed it was. Was it? Read on...

For those of you not in the know, the game entails your little triangular ship shooting asteroids (or rather meteors in this case) which glide about the screen. Once hit, the meteors split into more numerous smaller fragments which in turn explode into smaller pieces when hit. These can then be destroyed completely. Needless to say if a piece of meteor hits you, you lose a life, of which you have three. To make things even more interesting, enemy ships glide around the screen, taking pot-shots at you with guided missiles. You move by rotating your craft until it's facing the required direction, and then applying the thrusters. If all else fails, you can go into hyperspace, but more often than not you reappear in the path of a particularly vicious little piece of meteor!! Subsequent screens have more meteors and more enemy ships.

Meteor Storm is by no means a classic implementation of Asteroids. It is fairly slow, though Lightning solves this, and it fails to capture the charm of the original (...but only just). However, it is still a good game - nothing spectacular, but fun. It is certainly dated, but as ST and Amiga owners must know, pretty graphics and sampled sound do not a good game make.
Final verdict: 6 out of 10.

Jean-Yves.

FIFTH COLUMN

Justin Mader of Vienna in Austria has been playing D-Day MKII, and found it worked quite well on his Atari ST QL emulator. One problem he did find was that the colours were rather strange as only four are available on the ST for some reason (Mode 4 rather than mode 8 chosen for the emulator?)

Phil Jones, ex-Impact Entertainment, has been testing some of our commercial products on his Amiga QL emulator. Of the six he has an opportunity to look at, two worked perfectly without ant alterations MacSporrans Lament and Grey Wolf Dreamlands only needed a very slight amendment to line 30035 where a print statement gave problems. Three failed the initial test: Starplod, Blag2 and D-Day MKII. The Blag2 failed due to problem with dataspace. Rich Mellor has provided task which allow this to amended, but I'm not sure at the moment whether it can be done on the Amiga or needs to be done on the QL. D-Day MKII fell over when trying to QLRUN a QLoaded section of the program. This should be curable. Starplod fell over with problems with the INPUT job. Why this is we have yet to find out. None of this is necessarily a criticism of the program listed, it may be due to the emulators.

A word about the emulators. We understand that they all, currently, have pirate QJump device drivers as part of them and are therefore illegal. However the Future Datacentre ST QL emulator will have legitimate code we believe. Amstrad seem to be turning a blind eye to any private infringement of their copyright regarding QDOS, as most people will need to have a copy of a QL ROM to run the emulators and provided they supply this themselves this is OK. What would not be permissable is the distribution, on disk, of the ROM.

We hope to have a survey of the compatibility of the CGH Services PD Library undertaken in time for the next issue. If you know of anyone who has an ST or Amiga with a QL emulator please try out QL programs on their machines to see which ones work. Whilst a question mark hangs over the legality of the emulators it would be helpful to QL authors if they knew what the problems are on the current generation, so they can be ready when the legit ones come on stream.

Richard.

MATCHPOINT REVIEW

Publisher : Sinclair Research
Price : Varies with supplier
Memory: 128k (Microdrive only)

Time to get out the strawberries and cream again folks, for Wimbledon is coming to a QL near you soon. Yes, the noble sport of Lawn Tennis is available for your micro, and what a cracker it is too.

Produced by Psion (under licence from D&L Research), Match Point allows you to challenge the worlds best for a chance to win the tournament. It can be played by one or two players (much more fun!). If one player mode is selected you play the computer which is no soft option I assure you! You choose whether to play in the quarter-finals, the semi-finals, or the finals proper (not a good idea if you are a beginner).

The game then starts, and you are presented with a pseudo-3D view of the tennis court as seen from slightly above and behind one end of the court (rather like 3D Chess if you possess that). The graphics are great, showing the court, the players (always male), the umpire, ball boys, and scoreboard.

The players move very realistically, especially when serving, and can move anywhere on court (as well as a little off court). Hitting the ball is the tricky part - press fire to swing your racket, and depending on how you are currently moving, you might, just might manage to get the ball into the other half with a cross court shot, a lob, a volley etc.

The problem with Match Point, in one player mode, is that it is too difficult, even at quarter-finals level. Practice does of course help, but I have yet to win a set off the computer, three games in one set being my best score. Whatever you do, don't install Lightning into this game unless you are a masochist.

That said however, the game is very enjoyable, and if you have a LOT of spare time, you will probably become quite good and make it to the finals - who knows. Meanwhile, two player mode is the one I shall be going for, when I can find someone to challenge who will play with the joystick!

Jean-Yves.

BITS AND PIECES

Bill Johns wrote in recently to say that the club that he runs, Club QL International, is still in existence. They specialise in being a meeting point for beginners. Contact Bill at 12A Wenallt, Dolgellau, Gwynedd, Cymru, LL40 1PW. (Tel: 0341-423-905)

DIGITA INTERNATIONAL

I have to confess to failing to contact Digita International with a view to getting a review copy of "Rags to Riches", an adventure that was advertised in QL World recently. Did any of you adventurous souls out there get a copy? And if so, is it any good?

COMMS - QBUG

Dave Fullerton, sysop at QBUG, the Bristol User Group's Bulletin Board, was written to say that as from Feb 27th, QBUG will be on-line 24 hours a day on 0272-666187. It remains a scrolling v21/v23 board. QLTR 3 has a long and very interesting article by Dave about his Bulletin Board and how to access it. Also if you are interested in running your own Bulletin Board we can supply Jan Bredenbbek's QBOX software (v1.14 currently) to allow you to do this.

Talking of Comms - I tried the QL SUB number only to get number unobtainable. TF Services are still running their board - very good it is too! - and on there I saw a note to the effect that "Grizzly Bear" board is no more. Talking of QL SUB, Richard Turner sent a full-page advert for this issue. I explained we needed cash up front for it to printed, to which he agreed. If you don't see it in here, you'll know why. (The advert outlined how you can contact QL SUB!)

CHESS ARCHIVES

M.J. Edwards has available a program that will enable you to type and replay games of chess, with numerous set-up options etc. It doesn't actually play a game against you but has its uses in studying moves made by other players or if you want to record your own games as you play them. Costs were £10 for 128K version and £12 for the expanded one. (Please specify device when ordering.) Contact: M.J. Edwards, 6 Sandpiper Close, Sanderling Park, St. Mellons, South Glamorgan, Cymru CF3 0DL.

ASSAULT AND BATTERY

Supplier: KAOS Software, 39 Calbourne Avenue, Hornchurch,ESSEX RM12 5BH Price : £10 all inclusive.
Memory : 128K

There is sadly a lack of good quality arcade games available for the QL, with very few being released of late. Thus it was with great enthusiasm that I sent off for a copy of Kaos Software's Assault and Battery (A&B), a vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up.

The program comes on microdrive (hence it won't run on the Thor), and a working backup copy must first be made (how to do this is clearly explained in the instructions). For protection, both the master and backup cartridges must be present in the drives when loading - this is a practice which I really cannot stand as it means that the master will inevitably become corrupted after some use. But, as they say, C'est la vie!

The packaging is very smart, consisting of cassette box and instructions printed in various colours on the inlay card. Instructions are short but adequate, and there is no silly story about saving the universe from the marauding hordes of aliens...

OK, what about the game itself then? Once loaded, pressing fire (keyboard or joystick) starts play. You must guide your spaceship through a well defended series of canyons/corridors, avoiding tanks and gun emplacements, and of course any walls that may come your way! The action is viewed from above, with your ship flying upwards (ie the screen scrolls downwards), and you have a good view of any obstacles which need to be dealt with. The scrolling is very smooth and fast, even more so when Lightning is installed, though I must point out that A&B is quite fast enough without it.

Your ship starts off with only a single forward firing laser, but certain tanks release capsules when destroyed, and these can be collected. They include extra fire-power, sideways lasers, and temporary invincibility. Each time you are hit or collide with a tank/wall etc, you lose some energy. When this reaches zero, you lose one of your three lives. However, energy can be restored to 100% be flying through power lines which tend to appear after particularly difficult sectors.

Once you have successfully negotiated a stage, you must face the end of level guardian (mandatory it would seem in this type of game). These are VERY hard to beat - don't tell anyone but I haven't got past the first one yet, so I cannot tell you what level 2 looks like...

Technically, this game is excellent, with revolving gun turrets, speeding laser bolts, fast action, smooth multi-coloured scrolling, good sound (for the QL at any rate), and great playibility and addictiveness. All this for £10. A great bargain.

Kaos has just released a car racing game with up to three players against the computer. I think I might well be tempted.

Jean-Yves.

Assault and Battery - a second opinion.

On the strength of Jean-Yves' review I sent off for this. All I can say is that the game really is good. If you are looking for a good arcade game for the QL this is definitely the one to get. The graphics are excellent (not quite ST standard, but much better than the Spectrum could manage.) Control of the space craft is good on both joystick and keyboard.

I haven't even got as far as the end of level "monster" yet, but to say the game is addictive is an understatement. I shall certainly be climbing back into the cockpit to get through to the end of this.

Tactics? An autofire joystick certainly comes in handy. Beyond that, learn where the tanks are that provide the goodies, such as sideways firing, and aim to get them. Tanks only fire forwards so keep out of their way otherwise. Some gun turrets only fire in a single direction so wait until they've fired then press on. It's a good idea to shoot turrets before you get to them if you can. Note that if you hang around at the bottom of the screen you can still be hit by missiles fired from below and you won't see them.

Congrats to author Damon Chaplin and Kaos Software. Brilliant game. Decent price.

Richard

HINTS PAGE

DRAGONHOLD

Agnes Waitt of Barnet, Herts has the following hint: "The treemouth is the place where you first appear in the 'hidden kingdom'. You have to stand at the right hand side of it to start the directions you receive from the priest. Dig (S for scoop) with the axe to find the urn. Break the urn to find the map. On the map you will find a 4 digit number which you have to decode to get into the dragonhold." So far, so good. However Agnes has not managed to decode this number - has anyone else managed it. Even worse Agnes' master copy of this game has become corrupt so she cannot finish the game. Anyone got a spare copy?

T~ following are all from Rich Mellor.

DRAGONSWORD

Stuck in a coffin? Cough in it!

Poltergeist trouble? The diary tells you it hates the damsel in distress more than you. Find something nearly as good as the real thing.

Zombie in the way? Cast a fireball at him.

Can't open the door in the master bedroom? Look under the bed in one of the other rooms.

Altar in the way? Empty the acid bottle on it.

Can't wake Elizabeth? She's a real sleeping beauty.

FUGITIVE

Stuck in the cell? Find a hacksaw! Climb onto bed, saw through bars. (Quick way to Red Cafe.)

(see also Robin Barker's article in this issue for maore hints.)

NEMESIS PART ONE

1) Getting killed in the city. Normally there is no need to fire the blaster until you are surrounded by creatures. Save your shots for later.

2) Beware of remaining invisible for too long. Only use this as necessary.

3) Eat, drink and be merry by all means but beware of eating when you're not hungry!

4) Avoid getting rid of items too quickly. They may be needed later. However the torch and ring can be discarded when necessary if you want.

5) What can you make with twine, a magnet and a staff? Sounds a little like fishing for the keys to the solution.

NEMESIS PART TWO

Don't worry about the creature with huge talons. Just walk on by.

Do you want to join the pilgrims? Stab one and strip him of his clothes.

Hanging around on a hook? Twist the hook.

RETURN TO EDEN : HINTS

You'll need all the gold coins you can get in the game in order to buy men from the 'rebels' after you have given them what they are looking for (a jewel).

You will be able to get onto the isle in the swamps by using a stick (one of the characters has got one!) as a blind person would use one. There is a hidden path under the surface of the swamp.

To pass the guards, look out for a uniform and the key for the store room.

You can get something useful from the grocer if you can bring him some fishes (fishing rod and basket needed.)

When you have bought men from the rebels you have to attack the black fortress. You should examine the inside of the fortress carefully and on your way back you should have a look into the cave under the waterfall.

All the other problems in the game are not too difficult to solve for experienced adventurers.

Oliver Neef (author of Return to Eden)

SHOWS REPORT

The Northern Computer Show at Leyland, Lancs, 2nd December 1989.

As usual it was fairly chaotic with stands arranged round the walls of each of the rooms used, together with the entry hall.

A lot of the familiar names were there including Digital Precision Sector Software, Miracle Systems and Adman Services in the shape of Dennis Briggs.

CGH Services had a stand which was looked after by Rich Mellor (to whom many thanks.) We exchanged pleasantries and I was also able to show him the modified machine which I had arranged to bring. He was pleased to see a Minerva in action as he has ordered one. We may see the use of the second screen in one of Rich's new offerings. Hint,hint.

I was most impressed by Miracle Systems. Rich Mellor asked me if I had updated my Trumpcard expansion board. I said that I hadn't and he suggested I return it to Miracle Systems and they would modify it for me. He said that when he had done it the board was returned after a week. I decided to see if Miracle would take the board off me at the show, modify it and send it on. So, I approached the Miracle stand in some trepidation and asked if the Trumpcard board could be modified, and how long it would take. The guy I talked to inspected the board, and promptly handed me a brand new board with the words, "There you are." Nice one Miracle. Very good service from a company who obviously believe in looking after the customer. I must save up and buy one of their hard discs.

This time the show was not limited to QLs and there was plenty of variety. I was impressed with the quantity and variety of the spares available. Seem to be an endless supply of ROM's and bits. Not being an expert I couldn't identify many of the items but QL disc interfaces seemed to be available fairly cheaply. As did bare disc drives.

Bought a couple of CGH progs whilst at the show. Received them in time for me to mention in this article. I have tried Golf, which is very interesting. One minor problem with it. Why does flp2 become active at various points in the game? I seem to have flp2 on lamp lit for most of the game. The game is run from flp1. Not tried the second prog yet. As it comes on 3 discs (it is Return to Eden) I will have to set a day aside to start this.

John Vennard

OPEN GOLF

Regarding John's query about the drive lights coming on in Open Golf. I must admit to being puzzled by this. Rich Mellor suggests that the problem may lie in the machine code - as it certainly isn't in the Basic. However as I've played the game numerous times I can only report that this has never happened to me. Both John and Rich have Trumpcards whilst I have SuperQBoard and Silicon Express internal expansion and disk interface. Has anyone else encountered this problem?

BRISTOL QUANTA WORKSHOP, MARCH 4TH.

Thanks to Hilary I managed to get to this do on Sunday, March 6th. First impressions were of chaos. Although we'd booked a table, on enquiring there wasn't one available - eventually we were placed on a table which we had to share. Luckily the booking fee was refunded so can't complain too much.

Anyway business was quite brisk, met quite a few familiar names, (who are now familiar faces), made some more contacts and generally had a good time. Would have liked to have had the opportunity to attend some of the seminar sessions, where various hardware and software houses explained their goods. Especially would have liked to have seen Di-Ren's presentation, but at least I had the chance to meet Robin and Andrew. QView gave a talk about Minerva and Freddy Vaccha talked about PC Conqueror. Tony Tebby was there selling his new QPAC II and Liberation Software were selling their Minerva 2 screen mode compatible Q_Liberator and upgrades to QRef and QLoad. (If you need upgrades contact them, but we can sell the new versions at the old prices.) I also had a quick look at the Amiga QL emulator and it seemed quite good. (We understand that this emulator contains pirated QJump code so properly speaking you shouldn't touch it.)

Overall quite an interesting day, but next time, could the tables be allocated in advance please to avoid confusion. Ta

Richard Alexander

COLOSSAL CAVE

Harris Lucas of Oxted in Surrey has asked if the cave has ever closed up on anyone. "I ended up in a large room full of the items in the adventure, e.g. lamps, snakes, dwarves, oysters etc. I could find no way out so I threw a bird at the snake and the dwarves woke up and killed me!"

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

Dave Fullerton of Bristol (and QBUG fame) is stuck in part one of this adventure. He wants to know how to open the door in the crew's sleeping quarters, having got the keys from the smelly socks.

It's a long time since I played this one - but my notes mention that pulling the chain in the bathroom aviods the door jamming. (But which door?) The keys unlock the ammo room store cupboard.

DREAMLANDS

John Vennard has written in with a plea for help on this one. "I have reached the point where I need either a pair of skates, a cube of sugar or a snowflaked shaped key. Nowhere can I see any signs of any of these items. I also believe I need something to get past the witch. Any hints would be gratefully received."

The answer to several of these problems hinges on getting past the witch. To do this you'll need to throw the spear at her soon as you see her. And where is the spear? It's on the isle, and to get there you'll have to use the boat, the rope, the tree and the sword. Once you are past the witch you can get the sugar cube. The skates you can't get until much later on, once you've accessed the hole in the wall. The snowflake shaped key is, I believe, a reference to the talisman.

FLIGHT DECK

John Newson has asked about "Flight Deck". He wants to customise the program by reading in the data files in "Set up World" and "Set up Navaids". However he is not fully conversant in programming and so is wondering if anyone out there could give him a hand?

IMAGINE

Rich Mellor has managed to get stuck in this one. Having passed through the maze to the room with the chimney in it, he can't get back.

John Newson of Bristol commented on John Vennard's walk through of the first part of this: " I fully appreciated John's solution but he appears to have missed out how one obtains entrance to the larder without cracking one's head! I feel we need something in there to take us pass the toiling point at Two o'clock."

STARPLOD

George Jones of Hoole in Cheshire was stuck in this one, finding it difficult to get started. He froze to death on one planet (no space suit), got throttled on another (no weapon), shot the Irkoid ship to no effect and was promptly liquidated (ineffective weapon). However he had managed to get hold of the prayer mat by analysing some ruins. To get any further you have to move the canal bank. Proceed along the canal to the temple where you can use the mat to get a weapon. If you then visit a planet with a rocket sticking out of the ground and examine the insides of said rocket you can get a mask. On the same planet there are some pirates, but your weapon gathered earlier can put paid to them by throwing it at the door of their craft. Examing the environs of this one-sided battle will get you a couple more items of value to enable you to complete further puzzles.

UNCLE LOONIE'S LEGACY

Mike Tuppenney of Wadhurst wrote in with problems concerning a couple of the problems in this one. He's not the only one and fortunately has now completed the game. In paricular he was asking about the triangles, dark, keyhole and the flies.

Well, the triangles are all to do with the numerical relationship between the numbers on each side. One way of approaching them is to use a calculator and factorialise them. As for the "dark", a small insect is required here, but you won't work out which one until you solve the anagrams. The keyhole, naturally, requires a key. Whilst we're talking about this one, a small furry animal will clear away the log-jam, and two items, when dropped, will create something out of nothing for you to open.

Richard

DREAMLANDS REVIEW

By Jean-Yves Rouffiac
Cost £8.00 on disk (plus 10% p&p etc) from CGH Services.

Technical Details:
This is a text only adventure that requires a minimum of 256K of memory due to the sheer size of the adventure. The programme consists of five files namely:

BOOT (28 bytes) loads extensions_bas
extensions_bas (85 bytes) loads extensions_code and lruns title
title (374 bytes) loads dreams_SCR and executes dream_obj
extensions_code (1004 bytes) runtime extensions
dream_obj (114898 bytes) actual programme
dreams_scr (23552 bytes) title screen

The programme uses Supercharge runtime extensions and has been compiled by QLiberator. A simple 8 page A5 manual is included as part of the package.

The Story:

Having completed another boring and exhausting day at work you return home and retire to bed where you decide that it would be nice to simply live out your dreams in a dreamland where you could do something really useful. You drift into a deep sleep only to awaken almost immediately by the sound of the wind and the stone cold hardness of your bed.

You commence the adventure atop a 300 metre high stone pillar which offers you a general view of the surrounding terrain as well as the opportunity to obtain your first objects, one of which is a note that informs you that the Forest Queen needs your help.

The Adventure:

According to the manual, this text adventure is of the traditional 'fantasy' genre, where wizards rub shoulders with dragons, and where magical lakes and dark dungeons are the order of the day.

Unfortunately I have been unable to devote much time to the actual playing of this adventure and so can only give a fairly general over-view of the game. The adventure appears at first to consist of the main task of helping the Forest Queen and in pursuit of that task a series of other quests are revealed, (including the actual objective). In this way the adventure appears to guide you along right tracks.

A save and restore facility is available and, as with general good practice, should be used regularly. As with most interpreters, it takes some time to get the general feel of the vocabulary and the manner of usage although some examples are given in the manual. In my initial aimless wanderings while mapping the scene I avoided being killed off despite being quite foolhardy. (I hate those adventures that kill you off before you have a chance to examine the layout.) This state of affairs does not last too long as once you proceed further into the adventure death awaits the unwary.

So far I have only visited about 80 locations and completed a miserly 15% of the adventure. An examination of one of the save files revealed I had only discovered 18 of the 46 available objects (of which 4 are at the start location) and that there were five gaps in the list of descriptive words. This list of descriptive words is added to by certain key sequences of actions, so there is little help there for those that like to cheat. The list of objects may provide a clue as to what may be required at certain locations.

Unlike many other adventures you are not given the exits as part of the location description, but must request that information. You are automatically given the information if you attempt to move in a wrong direction. At first, this annoyed me,

but after a while I realised that it forces the player to be more methodical in mapping and in examining the terrain and once you have mapped it you are less concerned with on screen directions.

As with some other adventures it is important to chat to the other inhabitants of this land of mystery as this may reveal what objects are required for assistance in proceeding to new locations and may also add to your points score, though I have not had time to check this point.

The interpreter does not allow you to do certain things if you are not at the appropriate location and appears to confirm when some of your actions are correct. This may appear to be helpful, but at one location I carried out a sequence of actions which were accepted, but was still unable to proceed further as the final action could not produce the result that I wanted.

Recommendation:

Not having played adventures on other computers, I can only compare Dreamlands with others available for the QL. I have derived a reasonable amount of enjoyment from the game and I certainly want to continue trying to complete this adventure. Not having had enough time to play the adventure in order to review it properly, I decided to examine the code and can reveal that the adventure has plenty to offer. Not only do you have a series of tasks to complete, but you require the assistance of certain characters before you can complete your task and embark on your journey back to the real world.

Albert Watt

ED: Please note that Albert completed this review several months ago. Since then we have had to restrict the program to disk only as we could not reliably squeeze the main file onto a mdv. Also the listing that Albert refers to is not on the disk as now supplied. Jean_yves has now corrected, with the latest version, the goto and climb into bugs. The program now also features ramdisk save and load.

'ZINE SCENE

QL TECHNICAL REVIEW

We've managed to publish two issues of this so far, and the next issue will be put together as soon as this magazine hits the streets (well door-mats anyway). Rich Mellor is doing a series on learning machine code, Michael L. Jackson is covering business programs, a variety of authors are contributing revies of utility programs (QLiberator, Qpac, IDIS, etc) and we're carrying info on compatibility of MS-DOS software on the QL PC emulators. There's plenty of scope for more input, whether it be by beginners or experts, and we'll be having a reader's "helpline" - although this will definitely not include telephone help by yours truly who knows very little about the technical side of the QL. Subscriptions are (currently) £5.00 for 4 issues payable to C.G.H. Services at the usual address.

QLWORLD

According to an item in the computer press it seems that Focus Magazines have brought in a couple of people from Argus to help them with the finances of QL World. Argus used to publish ZX Computing until it failed to make enough money for them. It's a shame that no-one was able to pick up that title as it was one of the few Speccy/QL mags that concentrated on programming rather than just playing games.

Meanwhile many thanks to Helen Armstrong for giving us a plug for QL Technical Review and saying how reliable we were. (If only she knew!) Nice to see so many names connected with QLAF appearing in QLWorld. Do let us know how long you have to wait before you get paid.

UNCLE LOONIE'S LEGACY

WRITTEN BY DAVE, ANN AND KATY WATSON
PUBLISHED BY CGH SERVICES
£8.00 incl. media +10% postage

Have you got this yet? Why not? Come on own up at the back. The Watsons have come up with a great idea with 'Uncle Loonie', written using the Adventure Creation Tool System. If you are expecting the usual adventure, well your in for a surprise, for a start there is no lamp required, oh no, oh yes, no lamp, no maze, no suit of armour etc., etc. But there is a monster so there's no need to panic.

So what's going on? Well this 'game' is great, exasperating, fun, headache forming, tricky, impossible, but most of all addictive. You have just got to get in there and solve the riddles. That is what it's all about solving things to get the loot. The four page booklet despite a couple of mistakes tells you all you need to know. Uncle Egbert T. Loonie has snuffed it, solicitors Alexander, Alexander, Alexander and Alexander tell you that you are the sole beneficiary. The treasure is hidden in the old boy' place and you've got to find it. That's the easy part, so load your game and lets get going. The manual neglects to tell you to leave the media in place whilst playing, so now make your back up copy and I'll see you in a minute.

Oh, there you are, ready to go then? So load and follow the prompts, leave the sou on, it all adds to the games playability (ps. ed. is that a real word?)(Ed: It is now!) Now you've little choice really but get to the mausoleum and go right in. Now you are in the marbled hall with three doors to choose from. A good time to mention that the graphics are very good , I really ought to get a colour monitor to really appreciate them more. Sorry rambling again, you want to get on I can see, so choose a door, if I may suggest number 2. There's always one isn't there that wants to be different, had to choose number 1 didn't we, now you've upset yourself, calm down nothing to be frightened of. So can we go on to number 2? Right now the fun starts.

By now you will be confronted by a wall of words, each of which is a riddle to be solved. By solving these puzzles you will sometimes gain an object which will help you with other puzzles. You'll find all sorts here, codes to crack, missing letters, musical, snooker, the sky at night, painting and mathematics. If you can start top left and work along and then down, you will find the objects you need before you reach the puzzle. Some of these puzzles had me pulling my hair out, especially TRUBET, but then we will all have our particular favourites and hates. I liked DARK. You need to drop an object here, when you reach ADD you'll need to be quick. Alright so now you want clues, well I'm giving nothing away, apart from 'Be a very good boy', know your Prime Ministers and do your sums and you'll be alright.

So you've finished them all off have you? You now need to be back on the other side of the mirrors, the only way I can get there is to go to LETTER and press 'L', you will now see that you have created four pictures which will give you a name, if you take a letter from each. Right hurry along now back to the hall and off to room 3, here you have a computer to deal with. To answer its questions remember the answers you used earlier and this will take you to the last puzzle. Now you are ready to face door 1, you have what you need and before long you are gazing at all that lovely GOLD, GOLD whoopee you're rich.

So that's it really, I'm off for a well earnt rest and I'll see you soon.

MIKE TUPPENNEY

EDITORIAL COMMENT:

If you want to get back to the mirror from any of the puzzles, all you need to do is to type "mirror", in the same way as you can go direct to any of the puzzles by typing th name given to it on the mirror. Brilliant idea, well done Dave and co. Sadly Dave's course has meant he hasn't had time to put the finishing touches to Mines of Baba-Nogl yet.

RETURN TO EDEN
REVIEW

(Program by Oliver Neef, published by CGH Services - £18)

This, I believe, is the largest adventure game I've even seen; certainly the largest program I've encountered for the QL. The package consists of three disks and a small user manual. The manual is a simple affair, a few sheets of photo-reduced A4 stapled together. Nothing fancy, but simple and functional. In fact, one of the very few slightly negative comments I could make about the package concerns the manual. The layout could be better and the, now almost obligatory, background story could have been rewritten so that it reads better. But, as I say, the manual is simple and functional and it does it's job well.

This, i must add, isn't a full review of the game at all. This is just a few comments about the First Impressions I've made about the game. The reason I'm writing this is, I understand, that there is likely to be no other comments on the game in this issue - so rather than have this issue being void of a few words on the game I am putting fingers to keyboard. Secondly, I must stress that the game wasn't run on a QL, but on a THOR XVI instead. This may, or may not, affect some of the machine code routines within the program.

The background story of the game is quite simple; the heir to the throne has gone missing. The last time he was seen was when he set sail for the neighbouring island kingdom of Eden. Naturally, the King is rather worried so he has chosen three men (one warrior, one wise old man and, the third, his Field Marshal) to set sail and look for him. There is every reason to suspect that the heir is held in one of the newly erected citadels (called Castle Doom, or Gloom, or something equally optimistic). So, the three set sail with a boatload of equipment and promptly get their boat wrecked off the western shore of Eden, and so the game begins with the three characters extremely wet and without any of their goodies.

I've only played this game for two evenings (evenings in this case run from eleven at night to two in the morning!) and I think it's perhaps the best adventure game I've played.

Why? For a number of good reasons. Firstly, one is able to use each of the characters as one wishes. For example, rather than have all three hanging around together, one can have one chappie run off in one direction, the second in another and the third somewhere else. I've found that when I'm mapping that having counters on the map for each of the characters is useful, else I tend to forget who is where.

RETURN TO EDEN

Secondly, the screen handling is superb. The graphics and colours remind me of Mr. Neef's previous opus, Grey Wolf. Each location comes with it's own picture which takes little or no time to draw and, quite often, one can see clouds scudding across the sky. If I may compare the final result with any produced by Digital Precision's ACT then I must say that Return to Eden is far superior in terms of speed and graphical capability. I only hope that one day Mr. Neef makes an adventure creation tool package and markets it - I'd buy it like a shot!

Another positive aspect is that things happen in real-time. As actions take place the hours move on. Some actions, I understand, can only occur at various times of the day; for example, the inn (which I haven't found) is only open at certain hours and one can only enter certain villages at certain times. All clever stuff, which adds another dimension to the game; instead of being at a location with a certain item to perform a particular task, one must also make sure that one is there at the right time of the day! I have a slight comment to make on this point; if one moves a character for, say, five hours and then one switches to another character, the clock doesn't go back the five hours. This means, in effect, that whilst one character is doing something in Eden the other two are effectively having a rest. I would have liked to see the clock go back to the last time that a certain character was used (or until dawn of the current day if the character wasn't used that day).

I also appreciate the fact that, for once, we have almost a realistic adventure game. Characters in normal games seem to lead perilous lives; getting killed at each turn. In Eden this is, thankfully, not the case. The characters are able to wander about without falling down dark crevices, starving or being attacked by man-eating trees. Indeed, I left the program running for forty-eight hours recently and was pleasantly surprised to see that after 294 game-days (ten months!) the characters hadn't come to any real harm. Is this a record?

I've only wandered over the south-west of the island finding only one item of use which was lying on the beach (I suspect this came from the boat in the first place) and quite a few questions are starting to arise. The puzzles one finds in this game aren't too obvious, they tend to lie there in the background - perhaps, again, a reflection to that awful place: reality!

I've played quite a number of adventures, some of which have interested me enough to keep to the end, but none have captured my enthusiasm which this game has. Oliver Neef has come up with another winner, and I can't wait to have another sleepless night hunched over the THOR, and, hopefully, by the time I complete this game Mr. Neef will have brought out another game.

In a nutshell; simply the best game I've seen for the QL/THOR XVI, and if your budget only stretches to one game this year I think you can guess which one it should be.

(Malcolm Smith, c/o Norway. 14th Feb 1990)

W A R G A M E S U P D A T E

D-DAY MKII

This now currently stands at version 2.02 (otherwise known as the Special Edition).
So, what are the improvements which have been made since v2.00?

First of all, it appears that there was a slight bug (odd that nobody ever noticed)
which meant that there were problems in saving a game over an existing saved game.
Also, with the arrival of the MINERVA rom, a slight problem has been found with the
QLOAD program by Liberation Software, and so thanks to the QVIEW team, a new version of
this quick-loader has been implemented which should ensure that the program works fine
with MINERVA.

Other improvements have been very minor: with alterations to the checking of the keys
to ensure that <CTRL> <ESC> can be recognised on a German QL; the ability to choose
automatic movement from the MAIN menu instead of having to opt for manual movement all
of the time; and as per usual, yet a couple more bug fixes.

After correspondence with people who play and enjoy the game, I have decided to slow
the close combat routine down and add sound to it. However, for those of you who do not
like the new speed, simply hold a key down and the routine will go at its old pace
again! Also, the Allies now have a new unit type to play with - Paratroopers! These are
only available in the user defined game mode, and are equivalent to the SS Troops on
the German side.

Finally just a thankyou for all of your suggestions in the past - I hope you now enjoy
the game. Keep up the suggestions, you never know, I may find time to implement some of
them!

WAR IN THE EAST MK II

Development on this program has now actually progressed to the stage whereby Sharp's
have been contacted and will be distributing the new updated version. In the UK, this
will be through TK Computerware who own the UK distribution rights. Write to them about
an upgrade!

The program has now progressed to version 1.11 (although I am now working on a version
1.12).

So, what have I now done to the program?

Most importantly, I have now re-written the machine code to allow it to move around in
memory and therefore work on any QL compatible system, and then compiled the main
program with TURBO Digital Precision).

The promised pop-up menu has now been incorporated which enables the player to call it
up and alter the selection of options at any time during the Axis and Allies movement
rounds. In version 1.12, the player will be able to call the pop-up menu up between
each round as well so that you can save the game after you have completed the Movement
and Attack phase. This will make it easier to play by mail.

I have now also included coding to ensure that the computer cannot make multiple
attacks on your units, nor does it now lose track of any of the units which appear on
the map. Perhaps more importantly, the computer's own intelligence has had a little bit
of a spring clean and should no longer steam-roller past its objectives.

I have also improved the layout of the game, and although the map is still very
slightly too big to fit on a TV set, this should not cause any real problems (I have to
make do with a TV afterall!!

There have also been several other improvements to speed, if you want to see the true speed of the program, try turning off the Russian movement phase and hold a key down!! Improvements have also been made to the device handling, which includes error trapping and the easy conversion of a microdrive to a disk system (only the boot file needs to be altered!)

Yet again, there still remain one or two minor problems with the program, which I have no idea how to fix. Both Sharp's and one of my play testers, have complained that the program can hang up in the VIEW mode. I myself have never experienced this, and even though I fitted an American Rom sent to me by Sharp's, I still could not repeat the problem. I hope that it was just a power glitch at the time, since I can see nothing wrong with the machine code routine. If anyone else experiences this problem, do not hesitate to contact me via QL Leisure Review (The new title for QLAF) and provide full details of their system including what hardware and software was present at the time. Lastly, I am sorry to report that once again, I have gone perhaps a little over the top in my alterations to the program, which once again means that the game will no longer fit a standard 128K QL (although an extra 64K of memory would probably suffice). Still one cannot have everything, and so I shall just end with the hope that you enjoy the new version.

Rich Mellor

D-Day Mk 1 : Dagenham Design Cell : Where are they?

I have not been able to contact the original programmers of D-Day, who wrote under the name of the Dagenham Design Cell. I wrote to the address given to me by Games Workshop, but there has been no reply.

D-Day MkII : Play-By-Mail Opponents

Below is a list of people who are interested in having opponents contact them for Play-By-Mail D-Day battles.

Brian Sheehan, Flat 6, Moorside Ct, Fenham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE5
John Venneard, 5 Highfield Road, Hazzel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 6NS
John Shaw, 3 Barn Owl Way, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS12 6RZ
Graeme Law, 2 Elmbank Cottages, Stirling, Scotland
Jon Mansfield, 25 Station Road, Holton Heath, Poole, Dorset, Bh16 6JT

Please do contact the above people if you think you'd like to play D-Day by mail. As a special favour, we're giving you the right to upgrade to the latest version of MKII (SE) v2.0x held by either of the two players, in the interests of compatibility etc. Note this does not give people the right to upgrade from D-Day MK I or D-Day Mk II (v1.xx) to version 2.0x free of charge, you should still get your upgrade from C.G.H. Services. Rich Mellor is the person responsible for the upgrading and he gets a royalty for each upgrade we sell. (if you need to upgrade from MK I (the original) to MK II (SE) send your original master mdvs, plus either 3 blank mdvs or 1 disk, together with £6.00. To upgrade from MK II (v1.xx) to v2.0x send your original mdvs/disks plus £2.00.)

If any of you do manage to get a play-by-mail game going, do let us know how it goes. It could be quite interesting to read a blow for blow account of a battle. If you can do the occasional screen-dump so much the better.

Finally, Tom Kirby of Games Workshop has agreed to continue our licence for publishing D-Day for another year. We have had a few more suggestions for improving the game including a new unit mix and unit symbols from Justin Mader in Austria but because Rich is rather busy we've not had time to fully sort them out.

Richard Alexander

COCK-UP CORNER

DREAMLANDS

Jean-Yves Rouffiac has been able to cure two of the problems previously noted, regarding the goto and climb bugs. If you want to upgrade from your previous edition just send the master disk plus an s.a.e. and we'll send the latest version by return.

D-DAY MKII

See Rich Mellor's article on updates to War in the East and D-Day for the latest news here.

QUIZMASTER

Having just taken over this product I was slightly miffed to find quite a few spelling mistakes. Once we can get the source code from off Phil's Amiga we can inspect this and hopefully put right the mistakes. Also I'm looking into the possibility of doing another set of questions.

OPEN GOLF

Rich Mellor has now, with version 5.11, managed to cure the problem with the score card which hung the machine up occasionally when saving your scores at the end of a round. What we haven't been able to track down is the reason for the program turning on disk drives during play. This only occurs, unless I'm mistaken, on those QL's with Trump cards rather than, for example, SuperQBoards. Having had a word with the people at Miracle, they suggested that their board had its disk drivers in a different place in the memory map to the SuperQBoard's, and the program may be accessing this by mistake. We'll let you know if we can solve this one.

Anything else? Well not for this issue anyway. If you spot any bugs in any CGH Services or indeed any other people's software do drop us a line and we'll see if we can sort it out. Don't forget to write to the original author or publisher first. The only real difficulties occur when the source code is no longer extant as this makes changing programs very difficult.

Richard

SHOCK HORROR!

C.G.H. SERVICES PRICE INCREASES

In view of the dramatic price increases of new microdrives, at least as far as our suppliers go, we have decided to increase the price of all C.G.H. Servcies products on microdrive by £2.00 per microdrive used. However, as we have considerable stocks of the ex-Impact Entertainment software (Here We Go, The Gee-Gee System and Quizmaster) they will remain at £10.00 each.

Therefore all CGH products on microdrive will be £10.00, except for D-Day MKII(SE) which will be £22.00 and Grey Wolf which will be £15.00. Voyage of the Beano will be £10.00 on disk and £14.00 on mdv. If you want the text only version this can be made available now, but the disk version with graphics will be delayed whilst the graphics are added.

Of course, those of you who have your own supplies of microdrives will be able to send them in when ordering to take advantage of our "base" prices. These remain unchanged.

We apologise for this price increase, but without it people could, for example be ordering Grey Wolf at £11.00, of which £1.50 will go in royalties and £8.00-£9.00 will go on replacement media. When you add the cost of the manual, you can see that it would be totally uneconmic for us to sell. The other option would be to cease providing any software on microdrive at all - but this would be unfair to those people without disk drives.

Rest assured that if the price of microdrives does come down, so will our mdv prices. (It is interesting to note that certain suppliers never decreased their prices when microdrive prices were cut by 50-60%, this was, of course, due to the cost of the mdvs used, having been purchased when prices were high.)

Richard

PUBLIC DOMAIN NEWS

We've added quite a few games to the PD Library in the past few months. Some of these are the first fruits of our collaboration with QL Contact France. Among the programs we've translated (thanks to Jean-Yves Rouffiac among others) are: Dominos (lacks any scoring mechanism at present), Darts (I've altered it slightly to stop you ending up needing a 1 to finish), Breaker - another Breakout type game, Othello, and Solitaire - a version of the peg game (no diagonal taking though). Jean-Yves tells me that he is working on the Monopoly game, but this is proving rather difficult.

Other new items include some rules for Skat by Agnes Waitt, translated from the German. Send a blank mdv/disk if you require this and an s.a.e. Jean-Yves has also improved his breakout game and I have, at last, managed to get Four Games to boot up properly, even on Minerva Rom QL's. (Well it worked yesterday!)

Talking of Minerva I've found two games so far that have fallen foul of it (version 1.66 that is). Supremacy and Qthello. Both of these are compiled games and come up with the same problem as Return to Eden. I will test the "bodge" programs to see if they help as and when I can find the disk that has them on it. Anybody else finding incompatibilites with PD Leisure progs and Minerva - and other QL and Thor Roms - we'd like to hear from you.

We now have three demo programs in the PD Library. Rich Mellor has created a 2 mdv version of D-Day which can be played on 128K machines. It is very cut-down and doesn't include the improvements found on v2.01 but is still playable. On one of QLCF's disks we've found a demo of Ambition, so if you want to see if this the game for you, now is your chance to have a dekko at it. Finally, Digitrix have sent in a demo (again 2 mdv) of their Revisor program which aims to aid students with revision for exams etc. Price (for copying) is £1.00 per mdv (or equivalent) plus 10% for p&p etc. from the CGH Services library.

No more adventures have been added to the library for a long time. So if you know of any that we can add, or if you know of any authors of QL adventures that are not currently available please let us know.

SMALL ADS

Graeme B. Law has copies of QL Use., QL World for 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1988 available. Yours for the postage. Write to him at 2 Elmbank Cottages, Stirling, Scotland, FK7 9QB.

Your esteemed editor has a smaller collection of QL Worlds, including some early issues, as well as some from 1989. Yours for 50p each plus postage. Also loads of copies of Sinclair User, Your Sinclair, Crash, C+VG etc. Same price 50p each plus postage. (Extra 50p if that issue came with a cassette.) I also have some Spectrum games for sale at very cheap prices - send an s.a.e. for list. Finally I have a Speccy disk i/face and RGB i/face for sale.

Conversely Jean-Yves Rouffiac would like to hear from anyone who can supply him with QL World for October and November 1987. Contact him at 31 Hampstead Hill Gardens, London, NW3 2PJ.

Alan Mason, 3 Bransdale Raod, Nottingham, NG11 9JG has been selling off vast amounts of QL stuff including lots of books. He may still have some left - so write if you are interested. (He may even have a copy of Bridge and Williams QL Adventures book left.)

HARDWARE

Your editor has decided to get shot of his daisywheel printer. It is an Uchida DWX 305, which probably means nothing to you. It is a bog standard Qume compatible daisy wheel printer that we've used to print various things from Quill. Nothing wrong with it at all - it's just my 24 pin printer prints almost as well and does graphics and can have my ST and QL hitched up to it without any problems. Price for the Uchida? Anything over £100 considered. Phone 055-934-574 with offers. Also if anyone wants a Rotronics (Samleco) DX-85 Dot matrix printer they are welcome to it, as it has never worked since I put a screwdriver into the interface whilst it was still connected to the mains! (Trying to traighten out a pin.) It has been a good printer in its day (3rd march 1986) but now may only be of use for parts.

Finally the editor is disposing of P. software collection and PC 1512 (640K). Would like an Amiga set-up in exchange if possible. Ta, Richard.